

August 17, 1939

Messrs. Milbank, Tweed and Hope,  
15 Broad Street,  
New York, N. Y.

Attention Mr. Tweed

Gentlemen:

You were the counsel of Mrs. Wilks in the case of Texas vs. Florida, and for that reason I am writing you for the purpose of getting this letter in the hands of the executor or the proper legatee of the Estate of Col. Edward Green.

I am a collector of coins, and of currency, and I am specializing in the currency used in the State of Missouri. As you no doubt know, Mr. Green had a very extensive collection and among the items he has are a great many state bank notes from Missouri, as well as other scrip. I would like to buy these items if they are to be disposed of and will very much appreciate it if you will put me in touch with the proper party.

I wrote a letter similar to this to Roundhill, Massachusetts, because I was not sure of the name and address of the proper person to contact.

As you see, my vocation is the same as yours, but my avocation, numismatics, leads me into a lot of legal questions. I am just beginning to write a monograph on the legal aspects of Missouri currency from the Spanish period to date, and the more specimens I obtain for my collection, the more accurately I can prepare this work.

I will appreciate any courtesy you may show me.

Yours very truly,

EPN:JB

August 15, 1939

Executors of the Estate of Edward Green  
Round Hill, Massachusetts

Gentlemen:

I am a collector of paper money and specialize in items current in Missouri. The late Edward Green was very well known in the numismatic field and had in his collection certain bank notes from the State of Missouri which I would very much like to purchase. I do not know what disposition you plan to make or have made of some of his various collections but would appreciate very much if you could tell me who has charge of the collections and if the same were inventoried.

Being a graduate of M.I.T. I had the opportunity of knowing Colonel Green and did not at that time ask him to part with any of the things which gave him so much pleasure. Now, however, I would like to have you put me in touch with the person who could let me know what Missouri items are in Colonel Green's collection and how I might find out if I could obtain some of these items.

I will be sincerely grateful for your courtesy in this matter and if you would rather have me write directly to the person in charge, please send me the name and address.

Very truly yours,

EPN:AG



MILBANK, TWEED & HOPE  
15 BROAD STREET  
NEW YORK

GEORGE WELWOOD MURRAY  
COUNSEL  
CABLE ADDRESS  
MILTWEED

September 19, 1939.

Estate of E. H. R. Green

Eric P. Newman, Esq.,  
Messrs. Taylor, Chasnoff & Willson,  
Boatmen's Bank Building,  
St. Louis, Missouri.

Dear Sir:

We represent the Estate of Colonel Green and  
will be very glad to place your letter before our clients.  
While no decision has been arrived at as to the disposi-  
tion of the coins we feel our clients will be pleased  
to know of your interest and happy to keep a record of it.

We regret we are unable to write you more  
definitely about its position at this time.

Very truly yours,

*Milbank Tweed & Hope*

K

AIR MAIL

October 3, 1941.

Mr. Alexander A. McKenna,  
Chase National Bank,  
11 Broad Street,  
New York City, New York.

Re: 1-29-168  
Estate of E. M. R. Green.

Dear Mr. McKenna:-

Thank you for your letter of October 1, 1941, answering the requests contained in my letter of August 26, 1941, to Wilbank, Tweed & Hope. I am very much interested in acquiring many of the issues which you have listed. In previous instances I thought it best to ask you a few questions concerning certain items before I purchased them and I presume you will have no objection to answering a few simple questions concerning the ones now submitted. The fact that these items are Colonel Green's complete sets including pattern coins answers most inquiries in itself.

With respect to the United States cents I would like to know how many there are of each of the following dates: 1792, 1793 and 1798.

With respect to the five cent nickels, I would like to know how many 1913 Liberty Head Nickels there are. They may be classed as 1913 pattern nickels and have a Female Head facing left.

With respect to the quarters, I would like to know how many there are dated 1823 and 1827.

On hearing from you I will forward a cashier's check payable to The Chase National Bank for the items I purchase or will comply with such instructions as to payment as you may give me.

I will look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

EPN:VC



March 11th / 43

r. James Kelly

3rd & Einy. Dayton, Ohio

RED

1913 U.S. 8¢ Nickel. Liberty head  
Proof

5/2 cm 750 00

U.S. DOLLARS

1838 U.S. Flying Eagle. Brill. proof.

				ccxm	265 00	—
1839	"	"	"	proof		
				bfxm	95 00	—
"	"	"	"	proof		
				bfxm	95 00	—
1851	Proof			buem	100 00	—
"	"			buem	100 00	—

U.S. 1/2 DOLLARS

1878 00 Mint. Abt. unc.

"	"	"	Fine	baxm	20 00	—
"	"	"		bmax	11 00	—
"	"	"	Unc., dark	bfxm	<u>25 00</u>	—

\$1,461.00

March 11th

/ 43

r. James Kelly

S.E. Cor. 3rd & Bway. Dayton, Ohio

RED

1913 U.S. 5¢ NICKEL. Liberty  
Head. Proof

\$750 00





March 17th / 43

r. James Kelly

3rd & Broadway, Dayton, Ohio

RED

1913 U.S. Nickel. Liberty head  
Uncirculated with proof  
surface

\$750 00 OXCNL

*Handwritten signature*

April 22nd / 43

R. F. C. C. Boyd

131 Varick St., New York, N.Y.

1913 U.S. 5¢ Nickel. Liberty head

Proof \$1000 00



August 25, 1961

Mr. M. Vernon Sheldon  
451 Wrightwood Avenue  
Chicago 14, Illinois

Dear Vernon:

You have no idea how much I enjoyed talking to you when we were in Atlanta together and I want to take this opportunity for thanking you for all the mental and physical effort which went into the development of the extra heavy display case.

I was fascinated about what you had to tell me about the other matter and would appreciate it if you would give me the name and address of the gentleman you mentioned who might throw some further light on the 1913 nickel matter. You were going to introduce me and when that did not occur I forgot his name.

My sincere thanks for making it so pleasant for me and I hope many others.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb



December 8, 1961

Mr. M. Vernon Sheldon  
451 Wrightwood Ave.,  
Chicago 14, Illinois

Dear Vernon:

Thank you for your nice letter of November 28.

I would like your permission to write to George Walton and to offer him any of the information which I have. I will even read over his manuscript if he wishes me to. If I do not hear from you I presume you will have no objection to my writing him accordingly.

Thank you for sending me the \$5 Butchers' and Drovers' Bank. I have never studied the history of this item and am convinced that this bank failed and that this note is one of the trustee's certificates which was paid out to creditors pending liquidation of the assets. I imagine that this could be looked up in the Bankers Magazine to determine the nature and extent of the failure. Perhaps even an exciting embezzlement went along with it. I am returning the note herewith.

I am writing a book on the 1804 dollar, as you know, and it is nearing completion. It has taken almost all of my time since seeing you in Atlanta.

I certainly wish we old-time numismatists could get together more often but that's my fault and not yours.

It is always a pleasure to hear from you and my wife joins me in sending you our very best for the holidays.

Sincerely,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb





# AMERICAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

Chartered by Congress

M. VERNON SHELDON  
451 Wrightwood Avenue  
CHICAGO 14, ILLINOIS

December 31, 1961

Eric P. Newman, Secretary  
c/o Edison Brothers Stores Inc.  
400 Washington Avenue,  
St. Louis 2, Missouri

Dear Eric:

Welcomed very much your letter of December 8th last  
and the comentary about the Drovers' and Butchers' Bank.  
Thanks so much, since I have sicked the A.B.A. onto the  
scent and trail and only await their answer out of the  
N.Y. Office.

By all means write to Mr. Walton. I had a most interesting  
talk with him at Fort Monroe- MANA Convention.

Am leaving for Wichita this New Year Eve to attend Lewis Reagan  
funeral Tuesday. He passed away with cancer this past Friday.

Happy New Year to you and your's!

M. Vernon Sheldon

*Sheldon*  
*12/31/61*  
*11*

January 3, 1962

Mr. George Walton  
P.O.Box 32  
Charlotte 1, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Walton:

Vernon Sheldon has told me a little bit about your research with respect to the 1913 Liberty Head nickel. It is very necessary that your material be published, in my opinion, and we want to offer our help in any way we can.

I have the original case in which the five 1913 nickels were kept as well as the regular Indian Head nickel and a copper Indian Head nickel. The copper Indian Head nickel is probably plated but I have not had electric resistance tests made as yet and will do so.

I have examined all of the 1913 Liberty Head nickels and have a file with miscellaneous items in it, most of which, I am sure, you already know.

I will be glad to read over your text when it is written if you wish me to.

I have just completed a book on the 1804 dollar which will be published, this spring, and I am hopeful that it will end any doubts about the matter. It is a shame to have to devote so much time to bad coins but I have not neglected my desire to write about genuine ones.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Eric P. Newman, President  
ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb



January 3, 1962

Mr. George Walton  
P.O.Box 32  
Charlotte 1, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Walton:

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I have the original case in which the five 1913 nickels were kept as well as the regular Indian Head nickel and a copper Indian Head nickel. The copper Indian Head nickel is probably plated but I have not had electric resistance tests made as yet and will do so.

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I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Eric P. Newman, President  
ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb

January 23, 1962

Mr. John J. Ford, Jr.  
New Netherlands Coin Co. Inc.  
1 West 47th Street  
New York 36, New York

Dear John:

The 1804 Dollar manuscript has gone to the printers and I hope to send you a galley or page proof in due course.

If you have any data which I do not have on the Immune Columbia gold pieces I will certainly be glad to give it study to make the section mentioning it more accurate.

I am glad that you have a research man and I wish you the best of luck in his development.

The 1913 Liberty Head Nickel matter is one which is being worked upon by someone else who, no doubt, has ten times more material than you have any idea.

To answer your specific question, Wagner advertised the five pieces for sale in the December, 1923, January-1924 and February-1924 Numismatist. This is after Brown advertised them. There is a connection between Wagner and Brown but I do not have the details.

Dick Picker has told me about some unusual Colonials and I have seen some of them.

With respect to reading a manuscript of Taxay, I, of course, stand ready to do that but it must be generally ready for publication before I feel I should do so, including footnotes.



Page 2

January 23, 1962

Mr. John J. Ford, Jr.

You will be amused by the last line in my 1804 Dollar book. It states that the 1804 is an antedated fantasy and that the King of American coins is an imposter. I am sure I will not be in any popularity contest with those statements.

Naturally, I will be glad to help you on the Standard Catalogue but Whitman wants me to help them and my poor old self, who prefers to engage in a hobby, is getting entirely too involved.

As a dignified member of the ANS Council, I would like to encourage you not to use the word "mausoleum" any more. Please stick to the initials "ANS" even though you might think that the "S" stands for "sepulchre" or "sarcophagus".

I hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/ath

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

March 8, 1962

Eric P. Newman, President  
Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society  
6450 Cecil Avenue  
St. Louis 5, Missouri


Dear Eric:

I would appreciate it very much if you could me at your convenience any information you may have concerning the issuance of the by now famous 1913 Liberty-head nickel.

Maybe you could do this in the form of a pro memoria, recounting tersely the history of this piece since its appearance on the market. Please ignore, of course, all sales records, including the \$50,000 California record.

Thank you so much.

Very sincerely yours,

  
V. Clain-Stefanelli  
~~Curator~~  
Division of Numismatics



March 14, 1962

Mr. V. Clain-Stefanelli, Curator  
Division of Numismatics  
Smithsonian Institution  
United States National Museum  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Val:

Your nice letter of March 8th requesting information concerning the 1913 Liberty Head nickel is at hand. Several people have been working on this subject including myself. George Walton, who was just killed in an automobile accident, had a considerable file on this subject but, being the owner of a specimen, would not be enthusiastic in burying this coinage.

The most important thing to obtain are his files of the United States Government in investigating this matter. I have never seen them. I have been advised that they exist. Are you in a position to find out whether the Treasury Department will let you see their files? The men who obtained the coins were not collectors and whether they were Mint employees is a matter which the government has investigated. There is at least one coin dealer involved in the investigation. Apparently this investigation took place almost forty years ago.

Would you also let me know the purpose of your investigation so that I can be more helpful in gathering details.

My very kindest regards.

Very truly yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN:jf

March 11, 1947

Mr. John Ford, Jr.  
One West 47th Street  
New York, New York

Dear John:

On March 10th you asked me who had the information on the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel. I could not recall the name at that time. You really put the hex on that man. He was killed that day. Why did you do it?

I am enclosing a copy of the letter which I wrote to George Walton and which was unanswered. I was advised that he had done considerable detailed work on identifying the people involved in the early episodes and that he had seen and read the Treasury Department investigations which covered the activities of certain Philadelphia dealers. Some way must be developed to obtain George Walton's files. I hope this information will be helpful to you and I would like to write the matter up with you when the evidence of the government investigation is available.

Kindest regards.

Very truly yours,

ERIC F. NEWMAN

EPN:jr



March 22, 1962

Mr. Vernon Sheldon  
451 Wrightwood Avenue  
Chicago 14, Illinois

Dear Vernon:

It is very important to have someone obtain the material on the 1913 Liberty Head nickle which George Walton assembled.

You, no doubt, were a good enough friend of his to accomplish this. At an appropriate time perhaps you could ask for it.

You may be interested in knowing that he never answered my letter with respect to it.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
WASHINGTON 25. D. C.

March 30, 1962

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
6450 Cecil Avenue  
St. Louis 5  
Missouri

Dear Eric:

Thank you very much indeed for your kind letter  
of March 14th.

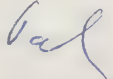
I wanted information on the 1913 Liberty head  
nickel for our own files, since this problem comes up rather  
frequently, and I thought that you had all the data at your  
finger tips.

I have checked some of the files at the Archives,  
but I could not find any pertinent information. Please let  
me know should you come across any reliable data, so that  
we may have complete details here in our Division.

We will appreciate your assistance in this matter.

With best regards.

Very sincerely yours,

  
V. Clain-Stefanelli  
Curator  
Division of Numismatics



April 3, 1962

Dr. V. Glain-Stefanelli, Curator  
Division of Numismatics  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Val:

With respect to the 1913 Liberty head nickel, I believe there is a Treasury Department investigation involving this matter. I do not believe it has ever been released. It probably took place either in connection with certain Philadelphia coin dealers or with respect to certain government employees at the Mint. I wish you could find out what these investigations show.

The first printed data concerning the coin arose by virtue of a deceptive advertisement in the Numismatist in 1920 and a subsequent deceptive ad in 1923.

I have the original case in which they were kept and the other coins which were in that case.

A number of people are working on this project but without the government files I do not believe we can form any conclusive opinions.

I have seen and studied all of the nickels. I did not want one in my collection.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN, PRESIDENT  
ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

- EPN/atb

New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401  
1 WEST 47TH STREET  
NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

April 26, 1962

Mr. Gilroy Roberts, Chief Engraver  
Philadelphia Mint  
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Roberts:

I would very much appreciate it if you could provide me with the following data concerning the change of design on our nickel 5¢ coins of 1912 and 1913. The Standard Catalogue of U. S. Coins (which we like to feel is the most authoritative work on U. S. numismatics) has always listed the 1913 Liberty Head nickel as an unofficial issue, viz, an issue released without official sanction. This has been predicated on the fact that no record of any such coinage or, so far as we know, of dies for such a coinage was ever made or preserved. There is also the statement of the Director that Liberty Head 5¢ coinage was not struck subsequent to December 13, 1912.

But after this much has been said, a few questions still remain and it is in the hopes of answering these that I solicit your kind assistance. I understand that in addition to the files preserved in the National Archives there are others also under the aegis of the Chief Engraver and Chief Coiner of the Mint. Perhaps then you can tell me the following:

1. On what date was the Indian - Buffalo design officially adopted for the nickel 5¢? (I presume that this date would also divest the Liberty Head design of any authority for further use.)
2. Did the record of working dies for the year 1913 distinguish between Buffalo and Liberty Head types?
3. If it did, is there any record, either in the files of the Chief Engraver, the Chief Coiner and/or elsewhere, regarding the manufacture of 1913 Liberty Head nickel dies?
4. If a record of said dies does exist, is there any accompanying data which would suggest that they were made for some legitimate purpose, as for example, because of apprehension that the Buffalo design dies would not be ready on time?



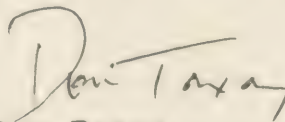
New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

Page 2 - Mr. Gilroy Roberts, Chief Engraver of Philadelphia Mint.

I hope that these queries do not place you in an embarrassing position as this would be far from my intention. I do think, however, that it is of great importance to establish, once and for all, the status of these coins which are and have always been, to say the least, provocative.

I congratulate you and the entire present administration for the genuine interest you have shown toward numismatists and numismatic problems.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Don Taxay".

Don Taxay  
Associate Editor of the  
Standard Catalogue of U. S. Coins

DT:n



TREASURY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON 25

OFFICE OF  
DIRECTOR OF THE MINT

JUN 5 1962

Mr. Don Taxay  
New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.  
1 West 47th Street  
New York 36, New York

Dear Mr. Taxay:

A reply to your letter of May 25 and its enclosure of April 26 has been delayed to permit of an examination of certain correspondence concerning our production of nickels in the calendar year 1913.

I find that on December 13, 1912 the then Director of the Mint, George E. Roberts, instructed the Superintendent of the United States Mint at Philadelphia: "Do nothing about five cent coinage for 1913 until the new designs are ready for use."

On December 26, 1912, reductions for the new five cent Indian Head coin were received by the engraver at the Philadelphia Mint.

On January 18, 1913, the Director of the Mint again instructed the Superintendent of the Mint at Philadelphia, in reference to the five cent piece: "Do nothing about any coinage at Philadelphia until you receive formal instructions to that effect."

Formal authority for commencement of nickel coinage was sent to the Philadelphia Mint on February 19, 1913 by the Director of the Mint.

The official coinage register of the Bureau of the Mint shows that no nickel coinage was produced from January 1 until



February, 1913. Coinage of the new nickel design commenced that year at Philadelphia on February 21st, at Denver on February 24th, and at San Francisco on March 3rd. A tabulation showing the total year's nickel production of Indian Head coins is enclosed.

The coinage register referred to indicates the following die usage related to the production of Indian Head nickel coins during the calendar year 1913:

At Philadelphia: 588 obverse and 490 reverse dies

At San Francisco: 80 obverse and 70 reverse dies

At Denver: 99 obverse and 67 reverse dies.

The official coinage register reflects no production of Liberty Head nickels in 1913 and it is obvious from the foregoing that none was authorized.

Sincerely,



Eva Adams

Director of the Mint

Enclosure

me 26. 1962

Mr. John J. Ford, Jr.  
176 Hendrickson Avenue  
Rockville Centre  
Long Island, New York

Dear John:

I have not had an opportunity to go into the matter  
but wanted to tell you that I have information  
that many years ago the Secret Service in-  
vestigated Ira S. Reed, of Philadelphia, and that  
this investigation involved the 1913 Nickel and  
could have also involved the filled edges on the  
1¢ and 5¢ pieces.

This file may still exist and I am wondering if  
your friends at the Secret Service are in a  
position to inquire whether it does exist. There  
has another incident that was investigated  
but I have no information of that nature.

Please let me know whether you have any thoughts  
to how this matter could be investigated.

Kindest regards.

Yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

E.N/atb



June 26, 1962

Miss Eva B. Adams, Director  
United States Mint at Philadelphia  
Philadelphia, Penna.

Dear Miss Adams:

You have recently received certain inquiries concerning the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel and I would like to ask you a further question.

You will recall that when you answered various questions for the April 20, 1962 COIN WORLD I was one of the questioners.

I find that Samuel W. Brown was employed at the United States Mint as a storekeeper and possibly in other capacities. I know that he was in that employ during the year 1908. Is it possible that you can locate his personnel file to advise me in what capacity and for what period he was employed at the Mint?

You may be interested to know that he is the first man to have had possession of 1913 Liberty Head Nickels.

I will appreciate your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Eric P. Newman, President

EPN/atb

June 28, 1962

Dear Ned,

You were going to look up a newspaper reference for me and while you are in the library, or otherwise, would you be kind enough to look in the Philadelphia directories, or telephone books, for Samuel W. Brown, who was in Philadelphia from about 1908 through 1918, plus or minus, and August Wagner, 31st and York Street, Philadelphia, who lived in the Philadelphia area about 1923 and probably prior thereto.

Is it possible that you could look these names up and give me the addresses and any other information concerning them and what directories they might appear in.

Sincerely,

BPN/atb





# TREASURY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON 25

OFFICE OF  
DIRECTOR OF THE MINT

JUL 3 1962

Mr. Eric P. Newman, President  
Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society  
6450 Cecil Avenue  
St. Louis 5, Missouri

Dear Mr. Newman:

I have your letter of June 26 regarding the so-called Liberty Head nickel said to have been produced in 1913.

In the data prepared for publication in the April 20, 1962 issue of Coin World, I stated that our files contain specific statements to the effect that the coinage of the Liberty Head design nickels ceased as of December 13, 1912.

In recent weeks we have been able to develop some additional information on this subject from the Mint records in the National Archives here in Washington--records which are available for public inspection. The correspondence brings to light the following facts.

On December 13, 1912 the then Director of the Mint, George E. Roberts, instructed the Superintendent of the United States Mint at Philadelphia: "Do nothing about five cent coinage for 1913 until the new designs are ready for use." Again, on January 18, 1913, the Director instructed the Superintendent at Philadelphia, in reference to the five cent piece: "Do nothing about any coinage at Philadelphia until you receive formal instructions to that effect."

Formal authority for commencement of nickel coinage in calendar year 1913 was sent to the Superintendent of the Philadelphia Mint on February 19, 1913.

The official coinage register of the Bureau of the Mint shows that no nickel coinage was produced from January 1 until February, 1913. Coinage of the new nickel design

- 2 -

commenced that year at Philadelphia on February 21st, at Denver on February 24th, and at San Francisco on March 3rd.

Our official coinage register reflects no production of Liberty Head nickels in 1913 and it is obvious from the foregoing that none was authorized.

Information relating to former employees of the Bureau of the Mint is released by and under the procedures of the Federal Records Center, General Services Administration, 111 W. Winnebago Street, St. Louis 18, Missouri.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Eva Adams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eva" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Adams".

Eva Adams  
Director of the Mint



# GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



Federal Records Center  
111 Winnebago Street  
St. Louis 18, Missouri

Date: July 6, 1962

In Reply Refer To: 6NRS-1

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
400 Washington Avenue  
St. Louis 2, Missouri

Re: Wagner, August  
DOB: Not shown  
Ref: Phone call

- ☐ An official transcript of Civilian Federal Employment prepared from records maintained in the Federal Records Center is shown on the reverse side.
- ☐ The enclosed correspondence is forwarded for your disposition.
- ☐ We have no record of having received the official personnel folder for this employee. If your records show that the folder was sent here, please tell us when it was sent and whether the name as shown above is entirely correct.
- ☐ Records show folder was sent to your office on:
- ☒ We find no record of employment for August Wagner with the United States Mint.

rao/hc

*M. D. Davis*  
M. D. DAVIS  
Chief,  
Reference Service Branch

R6-108  
MARCH 1961

# GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



Federal Records Center  
111 Winnebago Street  
St. Louis 18, Missouri

Date: July 6, 1962

In Reply Refer To: 6NRS-1

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
400 Washington Avenue  
St. Louis 2, Missouri

Re: Brown, Samuel W.  
DOB: 1879  
Ref: Phone call



An official transcript of Civilian Federal Employment prepared from records maintained in the Federal Records Center is shown on the reverse side.



The enclosed correspondence is forwarded for your disposition.



We have no record of having received the official personnel folder for this employee. If your records show that the folder was sent here, please tell us when it was sent and whether the name as shown above is entirely correct.



Records show folder was sent to your office on:



*M. D. Davis*

M. D. DAVIS  
Chief,  
Reference Service Branch

rao/hc



# OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF EMPLOYMENT

Action	Effective Date	Position, Grade and Salary	Agency and Location
Appointment	12-18-03	Helper, \$2.90 p/d	Treasury Department U. S. Mint Philadelphia, Pa.
Promotion	9-26-04	Asst. Curator \$1000 p/a	Same
Promotion	2- 1-07	Storekeeper \$1200 p/a	Same
Promotion	3- 2-08	Same, \$1400 p/a	Same
Change in Designation	7- 1-10	Clerk (Storekeeper) \$1400 p/a	Same
Resignation	11-14-13	Same	Same
Reason: To enter business for self.			

No record of Federal employment for Samuel W. Brown can be found after 11-14-13.

July 10, 1962

Dear Vernon:

Your memory is fantastic. I have been doing a little work on the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel in accordance with your remarks made to me in Atlanta. I have confirmed that Sam Brown was in the employ of the Mint during the period in question. I have not found out anything about August Wagner and wonder if you know anything about him.

I have not been able to get any secret service data on Ira Reed except that I know he was investigated with respect to the 1933 double eagle and the 1937 milled edge cents and nickels. Could it be anyone else that was asked about this matter or was it Reed so far as you know with respect to the Nickels?

I do not plan to be at the A.N.A. convention this year and hope that you will write me about the above. I know you do not write letters too often, but you have put me on a trail I cannot give up.

I also want to be sure that you were present at the 1920 ANA convention in Chicago when Brown showed the nickels, and that you saw the coins. Did anyone else still living see them or hear any remarks concerning them. Was anything said about them at that time by Brown or by anyone else.

My book on the 1804 dollar will be out before the Convention and I am sure that you will get a charge out of reading it even if some of the thoughts may be old stuff to you. I have never worked so hard to assemble material in my life.

By any chance are you liable to come to the St. Louis Coin Festival.

Kindest personal regards,

Eric P. Newman

Mr. Vernon Sheldon  
451 Wrightwood Ave.,  
Chicago 14, Ill.



July 11, 1962

Mr. James B. Rhoades  
National Archives and Record Service  
Washington , 25 D.C.

Dear Mr. Rhoades:

I am enclosing an incomplete check for  
a photo copy or photostat of the following records  
which you have in your archives:

Letter or memo dated Dec. 13, 1912 from George E. Roberts ,  
Director of the Mint, to the Superintendent of the  
Philadelphia Mint

Another dated January 18, 1913

Another dated February 19, 1913

There may also be a memo or letter dated December 26, 1912  
indicating that the engraver had received reductions  
for the new five cent Indian head coin. (Phila mint)

If there is anything relating to 5¢ coinage in correspondence  
in December or November 1912, or in January, 1913 ~~xxx~~  
not included in the foregoing please let me know what  
it is and I will order it if it is applicable to my  
research.

Miss Eva Adams, Director of the United States Mint  
has given me these leads.

Thank you for your usual cooperation

Eric P. Newman  
400 Washington Ave.,  
St. Louis 2 Mo.

Chicago, Illinois,  
July 26, 1962.

Mr. Eric P. Newman,  
400 Washington Avenue,  
St. Louis 2, Mo.

Dear Eric:

With regard to your July 10 letter concerning the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel, you flatter me about my memory.

As to the questions you have posed to specific Dates, let us have breakfast together and discuss this matter. Will bring your letter with me as to annotations that have accumulated so that it can be touched upon question by question.

It will be a pleasure to see you there.

Most cordially yours,

M. VERNON SHELDON.



MVS:M

4



# GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



*National Archives and Records Service*  
Washington 25, D.C.

July 31, 1962

IN REPLY REFER TO: NCRD

Mr. Eric Newman  
400 Washington Avenue  
St. Louis, Missouri

Dear Mr. Newman:

We are sending you under separate cover photostats of the 3 letters from the Director of the Mint to the Superintendent of the Philadelphia Mint, which are dated December 13, 1912, January 18, 1913, and February 19, 1913. The cost of these reproductions is \$1.20.

We were unable to locate any memo or letter dated December 26, 1912, which indicates that the engraver had received reductions for the new five cent Indian head coin. There are, however, in the Press Copies of Letters Sent To The Philadelphia Mint letters dated January 10, 11, 15, 20, 21, and 28, 1913, and signed by Director Roberts that refer to the coinage of the Indian Head Nickel. Negative photostats of these documents can be furnished for \$2.40. There is also a microfilm of letters received by the Bureau of the Mint entitled Records Relating to the 5 cent 1913 Nickel. This can be purchased for \$3.00.

If you wish any of the reproductions mentioned in the previous paragraph, remittance should be sent to the National Archives and Records Service by check or postal money order payable to the General Services Administration. (NCRD).

Sincerely yours,

James B. Rhoads, Chief  
Diplomatic, Legal, and Fiscal Branch

August 6, 1962

Mr. James B. Rhoads, Chief  
Diplomatic, Legal, and Fiscal Branch  
National Archives and Records Service  
Washington 25, D. C.

RE: NCRD

Dear Mr. Rhoads:

A check is enclosed for \$5.40 to cover Press Copies of Letters Sent To The Philadelphia Mint dated January 10, 11, 15, 20, 21 and 28, 1913, and micro-film of letters received by the Bureau of the Mint entitled "Records Relating to the 5 Cent 1913 Nickel".

You were kind enough to advise me that these items were available in your letter of July 31, 1962.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb



January 24, 1963

My dear Eric,

I have today spent much time in the District Attorney's office. It seems they are going to indict either Mr. Cappola, Mr. Favata, or possibly both parties on the wilfull possession of a fraudulently altered coin. Their real motive, however, for ~~in~~ the prosecution, is the fact that Cappola and Favata both sold the piece after they knew it to be a forgery. The Assistant District Attorney, who is handling the case, has selected me as his numismatic expertus and I will be called upon to testify about the coin and related subjects. I presume that I am entitled to be paid for this service, but as I am ignorant of precedents I ask you to kindly advise me what reasonable sum I might ask. Incidentally, they gave me all the testimonies to read, among which, to my great surprise, were several letters from your noble self to Mr. Favata. What a mischievous fellow you are, to offer to purchase or trade for his alteration! But fear not, I shall keep you out of the hoosgow, for if they locked you up, with whom would I have any numismatical conversations in the future? By the way, please do not speak to anyone of these proceedings. I will keep you informed, if you are interested.

I thank you for the articles of intelligence received and for your promptness in sending them. Strowbridge is the fellow all right. I recalled the name the same evening as we discussed the matter. I will tell you what I recall and hope that my memory serves with greater than its usual fidelity. The article appeared in a fairly early issue of AJN; I will look it up next time I go to the ANS. The gist of it was that the coins had been patterns distributed among the members of Congress, and that the design ~~was~~, ~~xxxxxxx~~ modified by Hopkinson from an old Dutch emblem. This seems very logical since Hopkinson was so very interested in ~~Dutch~~ heraldry, and also because from the 17th century, the Dutch united provinces used an emblem of conjoined shields arranged in a circle. I believe Strowbridge was answering someone who asserted that Hopkinson had copied Dutch emblems for the various devices on the Continental notes, and S. said that he did not do this, but merely adapted some of them. Anyway, such is my recollection, and I will confirm it when I get a chance.

I rang up Mrs. Holdcamper at the National Archives, and to my joy, she informed me that they have a large book of some 400 pages of ledger containing the expenses and contingencies of the Congress from 1775-1784. I told her the problem and asked her please to give me the cost of microfilming the year 1776. I cannot guarantee that we shall find anything, but it is too important a source to be ignored. Crosby evidently availed himself of these records when he showed the sums paid out to Eckfeldt and DuBois for making the dies for the Morris patterns. One hopes that his silence on the year 1776 reflects his not having scanned that year, though, unfortunately the chances are slim. Tomorrow I shall read as much of the New York newspapers for 1776 as the day permits, and shortly hope to do the same in Philadelphia.

I have in front of me the scetch of the rollers you kindly sent. It somewhat resembles a picture of the planishing rollers that were used in the British Mint in the late 18th century. The planishing rollers were used to polish the gold strips ~~xx~~ after they had been reduced to their proper thickness by the regular ~~rolling~~ rolling mill. They were operated by hand, as the machine in your scetch appears to be. I looked again at the Boudinot inventory and see that the item in question was described as a "drawing machine for equalizing the strips". I had thought it was called "a drawing bench for etc." I suppose then that the pre-Barton machine used at the Phil. Mint must have resembled one or the other of the two contrivances illustrated on your ~~xxx~~ sheet. Were they both used for the same purposes? Since the first machine has a slot in the top, the implication is that the strip was inserted there. But then from where is it removed? That is not clear from the drawing.

-2-

I have received back your coins together with a report on them, and convey to you the results. The 1859 Indian cent is composed of pure copper, and you may thus rely on its being a genuine essay. The 1935 nickel, as I suspected, consists of 75% copper and 25% nickel, and can thus only be a regular five-cent piece which has become badly corroded. Your 1913 five-cent die trial is a great surprise. Its composition is 95% copper, ~~five percent~~ <sup>5%</sup> nickel and zinc in equal parts! Have you ever heard of such a thing? What would the Mint have been doing with this particular alloy? It would be interesting to test some 1913 cents and see how they compare, only I hesitate to trouble the Phillips people any further, as they went to great trouble at their own expense, and made me up a whole brochure, complete with graphs, regarding the various coins. I do not hesitate to conclude, however, that your piece is definitely die-struck, and at the Mint.

I do not ever recall having seen the original source of the Brasher comment. The form of the language is similar to that used by Directors of the Mint, I mean the turn of phrase. But I may be quite wrong. If I can turn this up for you I will certainly let you know.

Just to show you how ~~poor~~ poor my memory is, I have just now gone through a pile of my notes and ~~come~~ up with the following quote, made by Hon. J. Hammond Trumbull,



January 24, 1963

My dear Eric,

I have today spent much time in the District Attorney's office. It seems they are going to indict either Mr. Cappola, Mr. Favata, or possibly both parties on the wilfull possession of a fraudulently altered coin. Their real motive, however, ~~for~~ ~~in~~ the prosecution, is the fact that Cappola and Favata both gold the piece after they knew it to be a forgery. The Assistant District Attorney, who is handling the case, has selected me as his numismatic expertus and I will be called upon to testify about the coin and related subjects. I presume that I am entitled to be paid for this service, but as I am ignorant of precedents I ask you to kindly advise me what reasonable sum I might ask. Incidentally, they gave me all the testimonies to read, among which, to my great surprise, were several letters from your noble self to Mr. Favata. What a mischievous fellow you are, to offer to purchase or trade for his alteration! But fear not, I shall keep you out of the hoosgow, for if they locked you up, with whom would I have any numismatrical conversations in the future? By the way, please do not speak to anyone of these proceedings. I will keep you informed, if you are interested.

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I have received back your coins together with a report on them, and convey to you the results. The 1859 Indian cent is composed of pure copper, and you may thus rely on its being a genuine essay. The 1935 nickel, as I suspected, consists of 75% copper and 25% nickel, and can thus only be a regular five-cent piece which has become badly corroded. Your 1913 five-cent die trial is a great surprise. Its composition is 95% copper, ~~five percent~~ nickel and zinc in equal parts! Have you ever heard of such a thing? What would the Mint have been doing with this particular alloy? It would be interesting to test some 1913 cents and see how they compare, only I hesitate to trouble the Phillips people any further, as they went to great trouble at their own expense, and made me up a whole brochure, complete with graphs, regarding the various coins. I do not hesitate to conclude, however, that your piece is definitely die-struck, and at the Mint.

I do not ever recall having seen the original source of the Brasher comment. The form of the language is similar to that used by Directors of the Mint, I mean the turn of phrase. But I may be quite wrong. If I can turn this up for you I will certainly let you know.

Just to show you how ~~xx~~ poor my memory is, I have just now gone through a pile of my notes and come up with the following quote, made by Hon. J. Hammond Trumbull, in the Oct. 1875 AJN, p. 36:

"The devices on the Continental Bills may have been selected and, some of them, adapted by Judge Hopkinson; but in no sense can they be regarded as his "production." Most of them are taken from the emblem books, or from Dutch medals of the previous century."

Evidently then, it was Stowbridge who was being answered in this particular matter. Who is the source for the pattern attribution of the Con. Dols. Stowbridge or Chapman? If Stowbridge, does his opinion count for anything? And who is this fellow Trumbull?

I will close with a tidbit which you will no doubt find of interest. It is from Franklin's will of June 23, 1789.

"My fine crabtree walking-stick, with a gold head, curiously wrought in the form of the cap of Liberty, I give to my friend and to the friend of mankind, General Washington."

So it appears that this cane, which Franklin acquired in France, was the immediate source of his inspiration for the pileus as used on the Libertas Americana medal.

With kindest regards, I remain

*Don*

P.S. I will return the coins to you sometime ~~the~~ <sup>next</sup> week. Please excuse the typewriter and the ribbon, both of which are in their dotage.

111 Summit Avenue

July 26, 1963

Mr. Don Taxay  
New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.  
Suite 401  
1 West 47th Street  
New York 36, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Taxay:

This is to acknowledge your letter dated July 24th.

In the past, as you know, trial strikes and pattern pieces were struck in a great variety of metals including nickel. These, of course, were struck from dies that had been hardened.

Today, the only time trial strikes are made is when the design of a coin has been changed. Trial dies are made containing the new design and trial pieces are struck in the same metal that is intended for the particular denomination. Later these trial strikes are destroyed.

Both Judd and Woodin list numerous trial strikes in nickel in their books on patterns and trial pieces.

When the design of the Buffalo nickel was changed, trial strikes in nickel were made of the new Jefferson design. These trial pieces were later destroyed.

I do not know of any trials struck in proof except, as you say, patterns and do not see where doing so would serve any useful Mint purpose.

Sincerely yours,

Gilroy Roberts



214 Seventh Avenue  
Upper Darby, Pa.  
August 1, 1943

Mr. Ben Tenny  
The Netherlands Steel Works, Inc.  
Suite 401  
1401 47th Street  
New York 36, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Tenny:

In answer to your first question, no, trial pieces are not struck from every new pair of dies used in setting the dies in the press a few 'set up' pieces are used to test the alignment and pressure on the dies but these are not considered trials in the sense that they will be held for examination. They are only used by the die setter and are immediately returned to the setting section for remelt. They are simply regular pieces that are not completely 'set', have not had sufficient pressure to completely establish all parts of the relief.

For your second question, these set up or test pieces are always struck in the same metal that is intended for the metal and in a miller. They are simply regular pieces that are not completely 'set'. They are struck when a new pair of dies is being set in the press and this is done only in the year of the date on the miller. They are struck on the regular setting press (Kunkle press). If they are struck with power dies they will appear as proof metal. The dies will not be polished except when they are intended for striking proof metal. Sometimes coins are struck on a model press but this is only in the case of a new design and it is not done with regular dies intended for regular coinage.

For your third question, trial strikes on the same piece of metal as used for the regular coinage not struck in a miller have been made from the time the first 'nickel' was made in 1866 but only when a new design is being considered. After a new design has been tested, examined, approved and adopted, there is no need for further 'trial' pieces; only test or 'set up' pieces when dies are being 'set' in the press and these are just the same as regular pieces but usually not with 'set'.

Sincerely yours,

Walter H. Brown

August 13, 1963

Mr. Don Taxay  
New Netherlands Coin Co.  
1 West 47th Street  
New York 36, N.Y.

Dear Don:

The complaint about the attribution of the  
Welfson 1804 Dollar and my comment was published on  
page 58 of the May 10, 1963 Coin World.

As to the 1913 Liberty Head nickels, two  
were proof-like and three were definitely uncircu-  
lated only. When I say "proof-like" they were cer-  
tainly not "mirror-like". I do not recall any evi-  
dence which would indicate what kind of a press  
they were struck on.

I will be glad to see anything which you  
write on either of these controversial subjects.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb

August 13, 1963

Mr. Don Taxey  
New Netherlands Coin Co.  
1 West 47th Street  
New York 36, N.Y.

Dear Don:

The complaint about the attribution of the Wolfson 1804 Dollar and my comment was published on page 58 of the May 10, 1963 Coin World.

As to the 1913 Liberty Head nickels, two were proof-like and three were definitely uncirculated only. When I say "proof-like" they were certainly not "mirror-like". I do not recall any evidence which would indicate what kind of a press they were struck on.

I will be glad to see anything which you write on either of these controversial subjects.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb



144 Summit Avenue  
Upper Darby, Pa.  
August 20, 1963

Mr. Don Tenny  
New Netherlands Coin Company, Inc.  
Suite 401  
1 West 47th Street  
New York 36, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Tenny:

Please pardon the delay in replying to your letter of August 1st.  
I have just returned from my vacation.

In reply to your question, proof dies are made in the Fall of the  
year prior to their date but are not put in the presses until the  
first working day of the new year and no trial or test pieces are  
made prior to the year of the date on the dies.

Sincerely yours,

Gilroy Roberts

## New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401  
1 WEST 47TH STREET  
NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

Oct. 6, 1963

Dear Eric,

The following is a passage of a letter which Hewitt has written and *which* will probably be published:

"I know that Mr. Taxay is burned up at me because I said that his book didn't contain anything new on the 1913 Liberty nickels that I didn't already know. I consider the Directors letter of Dec. 1912 as referring to coinage of the new Buaffalo design and not referring to the Liberty design. As to Brown's employment in the mint, Jack Ogilvie, ANA historian, long ago documented ~~BMK~~ Brown's life... that he became mayor of his home town etc. I believe Jack read his paper at one of the California clubs.

"Back in the 1860 to 1880 period when the mint was making patterns like mad... it was a simple matter to make "pieces de caprice" like the restrikes of 1801, 02, 04 dollars with no one asking question. However, in this century striking of a special coin would require the collaboration of a number of people. Too many for someone not to talk or report the incident...."

Do you know anything about this Ogilvie <sup>it</sup> paper? If Hewitt knew ~~of this~~ <sup>all</sup> the time, why did he always pick up the story at the 1920 ANA convention when he reiterated it umpteen times in NSM? What do you have to say in regard to the <sup>above</sup>? Am anxious to receive your reply.

I have come across the correspondence of Boulton with John H. Mitchell, and there is an interesting reference on the part of the former, of Jarvis' having been in England at the same time as Mitchell. Are you familiar with this letter?

Yours with kindest regards,

*Don Taxay*  
Don Taxay



# New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401

1 WEST 47TH STREET  
NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

Oct. 11, 1963

Dear Eric,

Enclosed are copies of the Mitchell-Boulton correspondence which <sup>you</sup> requested. I shall be very happy if you do not already possess them. You undoubtedly know the background, i.e. Mitchell was Boulton's contact in trying to secure a government contract for providing the U.S. with a copper and possibly also silver and gold coinage.

You completely confirm my sentiments regarding Hewitt. The situation is really quite complicated because: ~~12~~ Hewitt based his attack on ~~my~~ attribution of the 1913 Liberty nickels on this ridiculous 1962 over 1963 cent, which he claimed was a trial for 1963, struck in late 1962 and then mixed with 1962 blanks and overstruck. I wrote to Gilroy Roberts, and without citing the particular instance, sounded him out and learned that trials are no longer struck every year -- only set-up pieces to test the dies, and that dies are never set into the press until the first day of the new year. I thus wrote a genial fustigation of Hewitt which I sent on to Margo Russell, but she said she would not publish it with <sup>out</sup> Hewitt's answer at the same time. I reluctantly agreed on the condition that I would likewise have the opportunity to answer Hewitt in the same issue - you know, a sort of Hewitt Sandwich! H. in due course replied to Margo, sending me a copy. I sent you the part of his reply which would interest you. For the rest, he said that his explanation of the 1962 over 1963 cent was Gilroy Robert's explanation - which left me incredulous as it was Roberts who ~~had~~ furnished me with the contradictory evidence. I have therefore rewritten Roberts, stating what Hewitt attributes to him, and am now waiting for his reply. Isn't all this curious! In the meantime, Margo is waiting with my original paper on Hewitt's Scrapbook article, & Hewitt's defence. I have therefore to marshall my new data and make the final comments. I have written Ogilvie today as you suggest.

Yes, I should certainly like to read your microfilm on the 1913 nickel at the first opportunity you can forward it to me.

Kindest regards,

  
Don Taxay

144 Summit Avenue  
Upper Merion, Pa.  
October 11, 1963

Mr. Don Tenny  
New Netherlands Data Company, Inc.,  
2 West 47th Street  
New York 36, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Tenny:

In reference to your letter of September 24th, Mr. Smith  
did not misrepresent me in this instance. A photo of a  
St. W. Smith was sent to me last July and in this picture it  
showed two dates 1962 and 1963. The 1962 was much  
faded but the 1963 was quite evident but flattened as  
it might have been 1962 also.

Consequently, late in the year the minor work have started  
on the new one for the succeeding year and one of  
these minor details must have become mixed in with the  
previously registered 1962 also.

In other words, it must have happened before the stamp  
was made.

Sincerely yours,

  
Harry Hagan





# AMERICAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

Chartered by Congress

JACK W. OGILVIE, Historian

P. O. Box 2221

HOLLYWOOD 28, CALIFORNIA

Oct. 14, 1963

Mr Don Taxay,  
c/o New Netherlands Coin Co.  
1111 1st Ave. S.W.  
New York 36, N.Y.

Dear Mr Taxay:

The paper that you referred to in your letter of the 11th. was, no doubt, the Waldo Moore chapter of my series "The A N A and its Presidents" which appeared in THE NUMISMATIST, Page 1483 November, 1962. I am sure Charles Wormser has this back copy.

I understand that the 1913 Nickel facts appeared in your new book "Counterfeit, Mis-struck and Unofficial U S Coins." I have not read this, but did read the article in the June 28th issue of COIN WORLD.

About the only difference in the Coin world article and my file on the 1913 Nickel was that, according to Norman Shultz who attended the 1920 Chicago Convention, there was only ONE of the five on display. I believe the minutes of that Convention says that Brown pulled out before the convention closed after leaving the nickel in the hands of Alden Scott Boyer. Rumor has it that not only did Boyer have all five, but a double handful which he kept in his deposit box in an old silver box. This has never been authenticated, however I got into a discussion at the Atlanta Convention in 1961 with a party who told me this story and said he was writing a story about the 1913 Nickel. I have heard it from other sources also, but the fact that, after 43 years, only five are extant proves this to be more or less a fable.

Regarding Samuel Brown's tenure at the mint. My "morque" reveals that he was ANA member number 308 and not the NUMIS at the Mint, Philadelphia. During 1912 and 13 he was storekeeper. What was covered was not revealed. In Feb. 1914, his address was changed from the Mint to North Tonawanda N.Y. where he became quite a civic minded citizen, and I think left a family. There are NO RECORDS in the ANA publications as to WHY he left the mint, but a rumor persists that he was fired. You will note in my article that I stuck to published facts.

I do have one record, not in the Waldo Moore article. He was a registered ANA member at the October 1919 Philadelphia Conv. Just a little over two months later the first of the five Nickels appeared at the Chicago Coin Club meeting. I consulted Mr. Mike Carey who was present that night, but he is too senile at present to recall this incident. So -- the question arises -- were the five struck in 1913 and held for Mr Brown until he attended the convention or struck at a later date and passed on to him during this period? In my estimation, the 1913 Nickel was struck in the mint by someone having access to the coin machines and KNEW WHAT HE WAS DOING. But when?

Their mystery is comparable to the 1936 DOT Cents and 1957 Cents of Canada. My opinion of these can be found in the Sept. 1957

just had an idea. About August Wagner of Phil. He may be the missing man in the whole deal. You mention that he was a dealer. This, I do not know -- BUT -- he was NEVER an ANA member that is -- unless after 1932 or '33. Thank you, I was able to pinpoint that is which I had to look for in the 1913 to 1925 NUMIS. Would like to hear more about him -- if he ever was in the mint employ.

and that is the same will help you in your search

# New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401  
1 WEST 47TH STREET  
NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

Oct. 16, 1963

Dear Eric,

Nov  
(1962)  
It seems that both of us are a little behind the times. Ogilvie published the bulk of the Brown information in THE NUMISMATIST in late 1962, when my book had already gone to press and I was in India. It seems strange that after all those years the subject should have again arisen out of the blue, unless JJF blabbed too loud and too often about it.

Gilroy Roberts has also thrown in a monkey wrench. Although he told me that dies are never set in the press before the 1st day of the year, he explained Hewitt's 1962 over 63 cent as a coin made just that way. But Hewitt has stated in writing that he showed the coin to Roberts which isn't true as Roberts says he sent him a photo.

Ogilvie's letter is interesting, but I think you told me that Vernon Sheldon said Brown had all five pieces at the 1920 ANA convention. Has your contact in Philadelphia come up with anything on August Wagner yet?

In a few weeks time I am going down to ~~PHILADELPHIA~~ Washington and then to Philadelphia, and if there is anything I will be able to do for you in either place, let me know.

I was grieved to read Breen's attack on you in CW. His writing is so unintelligible these days I could scarce make out what he was trying to say. I would write more but JJF is making so much noise in the background that I can't concentrate.

Best regards,

2  
Don Taxay



# New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401

1 WEST 47TH STREET  
NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

Oct. 22, 1963

Dear Eric,

In regard to the Boulton-Mitchell correspondence, the first letter -- of inquiry about Jarvis is from Boulton to Mitchell under date of May 4, 1790. The second entry telling that the Government has dropped Jarvis is from Mitchell to Boulton under date of July 20, 1790.

~~IMLXX20XX1190~~

I thought you might be interested to know that the first mention by Werner of his 1805 rara avis appeared in the Sept. 1951 NSM, page 742.

I also ran across a statement made by James P. Randall that he had bought the 1913 copper Buffalo nickel, but returned it because it was a cast. True?

The microfilm arrived a little while ago today, and I thank you for sending it.

Margo Russell is so mad at me over the Coppola deal she ~~said~~ printed the Lib. 5¢ controversy without waiting for my answer to Hewitt. Well I have written one now which I shall send (copy enclosed) with any modifications which may arise from data in the microfilm. Did you enclose a copy of Ogilvie's article in the microfilm, as there is one in there.

Isn't it interesting that Margo Russell wasn't willing to print a critical review of Spadone's book which Walter sent her, but was quite willing to run Spadone's charges against Bradfield and myself. I think numismatics is going to hell -- or in the words of the auctioneer -- going -- going GONE!

Best



Do let me know if I can do anything for you in Phil<sup>2</sup> or D.C. Incidentally can you provide me with the names and address of the Eckfeldt family, as I think I might be able to scrape up some interesting early Mint data from them. Actually I should like to get hold of the ancestors of Patterson DuBois also whom Stewart mentioned. If you know the address of any <sup>ancestors</sup> ~~ancestors~~ of ~~any~~ early Mint officers I would appreciate learning of them for you. Stewart, incidentally, cites the Library of Congress as the repository for Robert Morris' diary. Do you have a different idea?

Oct. 22, 1963

If I may, I would like to comment on certain points raised by Mr. Lee Hewitt in regard to the 1913 Liberty Head nickels.

1) The source of my statement that dies are not set in the press, or set-up pieces taken from them until the first day of the new year is also Mr. Gilroy Roberts, Chief Engraver of the Mint. Mr. Hewitt says he showed the 1962/63 cent to Mr. Roberts, but Mr. Roberts has written to me that Mr. Hewitt sent a picture of the coin which is not quite the same thing. In any event, Mr. Roberts was evidently explaining how the 1962/63 cent would have had to be made -- if it emanated from the Mint. My correspondence with Mr. Roberts (copies sent to Mrs. Russell) shows that normal Mint practice is not to put the dies in the press before the new year, and therefore the building of a whole theory for the 1913 Liberty Head nickels from one (possible) exception is to my mind illogical.

2) Mr. Hewitt says that in this century, the striking of a special coin would require the collaboration of a number of people. To what extent this statement is true would depend on the particular denomination as well as when in this century he means. There would have been no great difficulty in "getting up" a 1913 Liberty Head nickel die, as there would undoubtedly have been some Liberty nickel dies without the date punched in left over from the previous year. The date was not included on the nickel ~~but~~ until the Indian Head-Buffalo design. As for the ~~many~~ person or persons involved talking or reporting the affair as Mr. Hewitt suggests, this is the sheerest conjecture, and hardly logical as it would have meant dismissal.



-- Liberty Nickel continued

3) Since there is no record of any Liberty Head nickel dies for 1913, I would like to see Mr. Hewitt or anyone else prove that <sup>these coins</sup> ~~they~~ were even struck before 1919!

4) The directive of the Mint Director to the Superintendent dated Dec. 13, 1912 said: "Do nothing about five cent coinage for 1913 until the new designs are ready for use." Since the Buffalo nickel reductions ~~disturbances~~ were not yet received at the Philadelphia Mint at that time, I do not see how Mr. Hewitt can maintain that the correspondence referred to the latter.

5) My reference to the Barnard trial was simply to show Mr. Hewitt that even if the 1913 Liberty Head nickels had been legally struck (as he claims -- as die trials) their illegal emission from the Mint would subject them, like the 1933 double eagles, to "recall" by the Government.

6) I find that the Ogilvie talk, to which Mr. Hewitt refers, was delivered in November 1962, some time after my book had gone to press and I had left the country. In any event, it did not mention the Wagner ad which confirms the fact that he knew exactly how many coins had been struck. Neither did it mention any of the relevant Mint correspondence.

7) I have in my possession a letter from the Director of the Mint, Miss Eva Adams confirming the fact that no 1913 Liberty Head nickels were authorized to ~~be~~ struck -- and if that isn't good enough for Mr. Hewitt, its good enough for me.

Don Taxay

October 25, 1963

Coin World  
Sidney, Ohio

The 1913 Liberty Head Nickel opinions recently published in Coin World on October 25, 1963 indicate that the opinions of Don Taxay and Lee Hewitt differ substantially.

I believe that I am entitled to get into the melee because I still have the special leather case made for these nickels and formerly had the opportunity to study all five coins at one time.

The important fact which I believe should be further emphasized is that Samuel W. Brown, original owner of all five nickels, was guilty of deceptive and misleading practices from which one could conclude that the coins were improperly or unlawfully acquired by him. He worked for the Philadelphia Mint in various capacities from December 18, 1903 until his resignation on November 14, 1913. Although a coin collector and a member of the A.N.A. since 1906, he kept the nickels he obtained, secreted for seven years and told no one about them. He obviously feared a disclosure of them. He then advertised in the Numismatist, beginning in December, 1919, to buy for \$500, (then \$600), 1913 Liberty Head Nickels which were then unknown and which he knew no one else could have. Why should he want to buy such a coin when he already had five of them. To say that he wanted to know if there were others outstanding would make his advertisement dishonest as he had no intention of buying another in any event. The advertisement was obviously a deceptive price build up for the pieces he possessed.

In the summer of 1920 he showed the pieces, privately, in the special case at the Chicago A. N. A. Convention and said that the disclosure was off the record - another admission of something being wrong with their origin. When asked, he did not disclose how he had obtained them.

One of the nickels was exhibited at the convention, according to the October, 1920 Numismatist. One man is still living who saw all of them, in 1920, and heard Brown's comment about keeping quiet about them.

The foregoing actions of Brown are sufficiently deceitful to permit one to conclude that the coins were not acquired properly by him and that he knew it.

  
ERIC P. NEWMAN



October 25, 1963

Coin World  
Sidney, Ohio

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ERIC P. NEWMAN

## American Revolution

Series I: The Personal Scrap-Books kept by Charles H. Johnson, author of the American Revolution, Antiquarian, and Historian. 6 volumes as follows: Early American Coins, 43pp, ms. a great deal of material indicated. Lives of Revolutionary Soldiers, 100pp, index (24pp), ms. over 200 individuals sketched. Political and Personal Scraps, 1 clipping. Anecdotes of the Revolution, 2pp. ms. Original Essays and Newspapers/Scraps, blank. 8 vols. each in heavy half morocco, special paper, Royal 8vo. N.p. 1/6. 37.50

By far the most valuable of the scrap books is Lives of the Revolutionary Soldiers, as it has sketches of over two hundred individuals, with a copious index.



# New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401

1 WEST 47TH STREET  
NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

Nov. 7, 1963

Dear Eric,

Now that Hewitt has had his little fling, he has prevailed upon Margo not to publish anything further on the subject, as it might embarrass Gilroy Roberts. Margo now denies ever having promised me the privilege of answering Heitt which was, in fact, the only condition on which I allowed her to send my material to him. I finally capitulated as it doesn't pay to get into a verbal hassle with that gal. In the event that there is a second edition to my book, I will review the subject again. Isn't it strange that all of Hewitt's overstruck "trials" have turned up in the last few years since techniques for making dies from coins have been developed.

The Bushnell monograph has arrived, and it is a disappointment. It only contains B's notes on wampum. I have written to my cousin to look through the other volumes (a list of which I enclose) for Bushnell's notes on the Nova's, fugios, etc.

What do you make ~~from~~ the following article quoted from the London Chronicle D.C. 21, 1776. It appeared in the AJN Oct. 1891, p.45 It is a letter from an officer of the 64th Regiment in N.Y. island to his friend in town:

"The Congress have established a Mint at Philadelphia, where they coin copper and silver pieces about the size of a half crown: In silver go for twelve shillings, in copper for fourteen pence."

Let me know if you make any sense out of this.

I read your buffalo nickel microfilm very carefully. It is loaded with interesting material, though nothing in reference to the Liberty 5¢ coin. It seems, however, that two ~~reduced~~ electrolytic shells ~~were sweated together~~ of the Buffalo nickel, reduced on the janvier from the original galvano, which was made ~~by Fraser~~ for Fraser at the M dallic Art Co., were sweated together outside the Mint for the purpose of seeing whether or not the new relief would pass through the automatic counting machines just patented. I wonder if this could be your piece! You have not yet told me anything about it other than the fact that you want to have electrical resistance tests taken to determine whether or not it is plated. But why such a test which cannot tell you much and might possibly injure your coin, I don't know. Specific Gravity would be better, and X-ray fluorescence the best. I could have either of these performed for you here if you wish.

What a pity Vernon Brown won't talk. I wonder if his reticence is still as strong since he left the Chase Bank.

I am going to D.C. tuesday next, and then to Philadelphia where, if I have time amidst my other projects, I shall try to find something ~~about~~ August Wagner about whom you are silent as the proverbial tomb.

Best regards,

Don

November 12, 1963

Mr. Don Taxay  
New Netherlands Coin Company  
1 West 47th Street  
New York 32, New York

Dear Don:

I cannot permit your kind remarks about me in the Coin World Book Edition to go unanswered. I just hope I can live up to a fraction of what you said about me. It really was far and beyond the call of duty for you to write in that vein.

I am sure Walter appreciates the recognition which you gave him.

As far as the Bushnell matters, I believe you should strike the jackpot in the 49 pages on early American coinage, which are in The Scrapbook.

As far as the nutty quotation in AJN is concerned, this could be some other date than 1776 but I am going to check this out further.

As far as my Buffalo nickels in copper are concerned, specific gravity does not help as they are very near normal. If you can have x-ray fluorescence used I will be glad to send them to you.

It is not Vernon Brown who will not talk about the 1913 nickels. It is Vernon Sheldon. That was a mistake in dictation. Don't think I am silent about August Wagner. All I know is that he was a dealer.

I am enclosing, for your entertainment, a copy of a letter from Hoskins of the Money Museum of Detroit to Bressett.

My very kindest regards.

Sincerely,

EPN/atb

ERIC P. NEWMAN



# New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401

1 WEST 47TH STREET  
NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

Nov. 17, 1963

Dear Eric,

Have just returned from Washington and the archives. Got so ensconced in work there that I never made it to Philadelphia, but will shortly after Xmas. When I saw that Margo Russell, <sup>after</sup> ~~and~~ refusing to publish my reply was, on top of it, publishing provocative letters in the letter-to-the-editor column, I called her up and gave a mellifluous blast. She has agreed to publish our letters now, but is going to add one from Jim Kelly!! She promised to send me proofs first, but whether or not she will ~~abide~~ keep her promise I do not know. I don't know why she has aligned ~~herself~~ herself with these characters except, as you said and I agreed, that they just don't care what garbage they print.

You say I should strike the jackpot in the 49 pages on early American noinage in the Scrapbook. November edition? I must have missed it then. Will look it up.

I understand that you have original drawings of Weiman for the reverse of the Liberty Standing quarter. True? If so, would it be possible for me to obtain prints of these for publication in my book? I have found much of interest in the archives regarding these late issues and am going to devote a good sized section to them. *Do you know the whereabouts of any other related material?*

Enclosed is the answer to Hewitt & Co. which I have sent to the good Damoiselle.

Yours sincerely,

*Don Taxay*  
Don Taxay

Why talk of the call of duty? I ~~would~~ simply would like the Coin World public to learn to differentiate between the quality of your writings and, say, Spadone's. But perhaps this is not possible.

By the way, when are you and Bresset going to ~~come~~ come out with your work on the 1913 Liberty Head nickel? Wasn't it ~~going~~ to be called "The Fantastic 1913 Liberty Head nickel"? The name rings a bell.

*I understand now. You meant the Bushnell deal. But that's just what I received & it's all about the blasted wampum!!*

A few weeks ago Coin World ran an <sup>exchange</sup> ~~exchange~~ of ideas by Mr. Hewitt and myself regarding the legitimacy of the 1913 Liberty Head nickel. These were followed by certain comments in the letters-to-the-Editor column, with the result that the issue has again become obscured. I would therefore like to ~~take~~ take the opportunity to clarify it.

It was said that the source who advised me that the Mint did not set dies into the presses and strike trials or set-up pieces before the first of the year was biased. My source was, in fact, the Philadelphia Mint. Several inquiries including my own ~~XXXXXX~~ (a copy of which is in the possession of Mrs. Margo Russell) have been answered by the Mint with an emphatic assurance on this point. If, therefore, any exceptions have been made <sup>later</sup> ~~of late~~ by the coiner, they do not represent common Mint practice.

That a comparison should have been drawn between such pieces and the 1913 Liberty Head nickels was, however, erroneous to begin with. Even Mr. Hewitt admitted in his Scrapbook article that if it could be shown that the Indian ~~xx~~ Head and Buffalo designs were approved before the fall of 1912, when new dies would have been made, that his die trial theory would not hold. To please Mr. Hewitt I have gone through all the national archives relating to the adoption of the Buffalo nickel, and find, indeed, that in early July, 1912, Secretary ~~XXXXXX~~ of the Treasury MacVeigh specifically approved Fraser's designs, requesting only that the medallist lower his relief slightly, and if practicable, increase the size of the <sup>lettering</sup> ~~XXXXXX~~ which showed the denomination. The archives also indicate that at no time after this was there any question that the new nickel would be used from the outset of 1913. The delay, until February, in actually striking the coins resulted only from the Mint's trying to please a certain vending machine company <sup>which</sup> ~~who~~ kept asking for slight adjustments in the ~~relief~~ relief of Fraser's designs. The Mint finally gave up its efforts to satisfy ~~their~~ the Com-



pany's apparatus, and belatedly proceeded to strike the new coins.

The ~~xxx~~ statement printed in the letters-to-the-Editor column by a Mr. <sup>Brown</sup> ~~Rager~~ Cohen to the effect that the Indian did not model for Fraser until some time between Nov. 1912 and April 1913, is an absurdity which hardly requires further comment. Fraser had already made electrotypes of his Indian Head and Buffalo design by September 1911, and his original sketches were executed at a much earlier ~~xxxx~~ date.

Mr. Hewitt attempts to vitiate my earlier arguments by saying that they were all given "long ago" in a talk by Mr. Ogilvie. I find that this "long ago" means November 1962, long after my book had gone to press. Also, the facts presented were only partial.

Mr. Hewitt says that in the twentieth century it would be too difficult for employees at the Mint to get up an artificial issue. The ~~xxxxxx~~ truth of this statement would depend on when in the twentieth century he means. It would not apply to the 1913 Liberty Head nickel for the reason that the date was still punched into the working dies for the five cent denomination until the commencement of the Buffalo type. All that would have been required then, was for someone in the Coiner's ~~department; during~~ or Engraver's department during ~~XXXX~~ late 1912, to take an unused, dateless die and punch in 1913.

Mr. Hewitt completely misunderstood my reference to the Barnard trial and the confiscation of the 1933 double eagle. I was attempting to make him realize that even if the 1913 Liberty Head nickels should be considered as die trials (though there is no reason to do so) their emission from the Mint would still be illegal and <sup>they would be</sup> subject ~~them~~ to confiscation.

Lastly, I should mention that I have in my possession a letter from the present Director of the Mint which states that no 1913 Liberty Head nickels were authorized to be struck. If this isn't good enough for Mr. Hewitt, it is <sup>at least</sup> good enough for me.

~~But my doubts are as to whether, in view of the fact that the owners of these coins, I would humbly suggest that they submit their coin, together with the accumulative data presented in this issue of Coin World, to the Treasury Department, and solicit their~~

If any of the owners of these coins, however, still have doubts on the subject, I would humbly suggest that they submit their coin, together with the accumulative data presented in this issue of Coin World, to the Treasury Department, and solicit their opinion on the matter.

# New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401

1 WEST 47TH STREET

NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

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PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

Nov. 27, 1963

Dear Eric,

CMW is not in the office today, but JJF, who is the one going to Philadelphia, has consented to bringing your MacNeil scetches back with him. I very much appreciate your lending them to me for use in the book.

Yes, I certainly sent your comments re the 1913 nickel to Coin World. JJF has also submitted some of his own. Margo's procrastination is inexcusable. She says she is going to try her best to publish them all before Xmas.

Kindest regards,

  
Don



# The NUMISMATIC SCRAPBOOK MAGAZINE

7320 MILWAUKEE AVENUE

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CHICAGO 48, ILLINOIS.

LEE F. HEWITT—*Editor*

Dec. 5, 1963

Dear Eric:

Enclosed are the two tear sheets  
you requested... and thanks for the  
nice words about the December issue.

Lynn Glaser is back home,  
3012 Joshua Road, Lafayette Hill, Pa.

The other evening I was searching  
back numbers for some info and ran  
into a letter of James Randall which  
stated that the Buffalo nickel in copper  
that was in the 1913 Liberty set was  
a casting. Inasmuch as you probably  
still have the coin and coin — for my own  
information — not for publication — is it a  
struck or cast piece?

Yours  
Lee FH

# NATIONAL BANK OF DETROIT

DETROIT 32, MICHIGAN

W000ward 5-6000

Mr. Kenneth E. Bressett  
Whitman Publishing Company  
1220 Mound Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Ken:

Please place the Money Museum on the mailing list for your new monthly numismatic periodical and send us a bill for a one-year subscription.

When will you again be in Detroit? If not before next year, we're looking forward to seeing you at the next A convention.

Incidentally, is Eric Newman still working on the 1913 nickel story? And are you collaborating? He's well located for the project, since the government's old personnel records are kept in Saint Louis. I believe, and records of Mr. Brown's service at the Philadelphia Mint should be housed there. From the information I have, however, he seems to have an unblemished record.

I wonder - was Mr. Brown by chance at any time a personal friend of Ira Reed? Something might be gained by tracing that possibility. True, Brown left the mint 15 to 20 years before Reed became known for his supposed unofficial connections in the Mint, but if they were good friends, information on Brown might be found in Ira Reed's papers. That this is only a long shot, but still a possibility.

Looking forward to seeing you again, I am,

Sincerely,



EPN

December 16, 1963

Mrs. Margo Russell  
Coin World  
Sidney News Building  
Sidney, Ohio

Dear Margo:

There seems to be some difficulty with respect to publishing further items on the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel which Don Taxay has written and which John Ford and myself have also written. It is perfectly healthy to have various conflicting opinions published so long as they are handled gracefully.

I would like to know what the difficulty is and if you care to telephone me I will appreciate it.

I do not feel that the matter should be sent to another newspaper if Coin World plans to use it.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb

## New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401  
1 WEST 47TH STREET  
NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

Dec. 12, 1963

Dear Eric,

If the enclosed letter meets with your approval, will you please send me a letter to send to Coin World asking them to return your letter to me. It seems that Mrs. Russell is a very undependable person, and I would like to have our articles (JJF has also submitted one) published somewhere else, if possible, perhaps in Numismatic News. Let me know what you think of this. *(I have not yet sent the original to Coin World)*

It seems that the 64th Regiment arrived in New York (from Boston) with Howe on August 1, 1776. They came to Boston way back in 1769, but whether they ever got near Phila. I have yet to learn. York Island was apparently the British name for Manhattan Island, but I will get confirmation of this. If the Mass. cents of 1776 had ever circulated they could have been one source of the confusion, but, perhaps, the original version of the Chronicle article will shed more light.

Regards,





Dec. 15, 1963

Mr. J. Oliver Amos  
Coin World  
Sidney News Bldg.  
Sidney, Ohio

Dear Mr. Amos,

May I bring to your attention a subject which, perhaps, you are not aware of? A few months back, I submitted to Mrs. Russell an article on the 1913 Liberty Head nickel, which refuted certain erroneous claims made by Mr. Lee Hewitt in a review of my book. Mrs. Russell then wrote to me advising that she would not publish the article unless it were accompanied by an answer from Mr. Hewitt. I agreed very reluctantly, and then only on the condition that I would be allowed to reply to Hewitt's reply at the same time. In contravention to this agreement the articles were published without waiting for my reply which was submitted a short time later. To this date, in fact, neither my reply nor the accompanying articles by Eric P. Newman and John Ford (the last lately sent to Mrs. Russell) have been published, though Coin World has found time and space enough to print other erroneous letters on the subject in the editor's column.

I have received numerous queries from numismatists who know that I could very well answer Hewitt, inquiring why I have not done so. I have had to inform these persons that Coin World has my article and those of Messrs. Newman and Ford, but does not seem to care to publish them. I have inquired several times of Mrs. Russell regarding this matter, but beyond her promises that they will be very shortly published, nothing has been done. The upshot of the matter is that you have put me in a false and embarrassing position by breaking your pledge. I think I have waited for more than a reasonable length of time and must therefore request ~~refuse~~ that unless these articles be published within a very short period of time, and by a definite date, that they be returned to me so that they may be published elsewhere. I do not think that this would, frankly, reflect very well on Coin World, but I leave the decision for you to make.

As Mrs. Russell is aware, I was about to present Coin World with an excellent monograph on early half dollars, but I have refrained from doing so until the present matter should be settled in an equitable manner.

I might also mention that, a few months ago, Mrs. Russell solicited an article from me for your annual book section, promising that Coin World would remunerate me by giving my own book a large blurb in the issue. Although I complied with her request, Coin World, in the above-mentioned issue, conspicuously ignored my book, though considerable publicity was given to dozens of other works.

In view of these circumstances I am frankly at a loss to know when I can take you at your word and therefore request that you inform me by return mail in what manner you wish to resolve the present issue.

Yours sincerely,

Don Lacey

December 17, 1963

Mr. Lee Hewitt, Editor  
Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine  
7320 Milwaukee Avenue  
Chicago 48, Illinois

Dear Lee:

You asked me about the statement of James Randall that the Buffalo nickel, in copper, which was in the 1913 Liberty Head nickel group was a casting. The one thing it isn't, is a casting. I have the case and the coin, as you know. It is definitely a struck piece. It is the type II variety. Whether it is pure copper, or a real clever job of plating copper over nickel, I do not know and have not been able to determine. I am trying to have that determination made by some electrical resistance method which will not harm the piece. I will certainly let you know the results if they mean anything.

I realize you are interested in the 1913 Liberty Head nickel matter and will keep both you and Don Taxay advised as to any facts I turn up.

There is nothing like a good dual with beanbags.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb

Don Taxay



## New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

SUITE 401

1 WEST 47TH STREET

NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

PHONES PLAZA 7-5245-6

Dec. 18, 1963

Dear Eric,

I received a copy of your letter to Hewitt with interest. Hewitt is not interested in fair play and it would not be wise to give him information which he may try to use against you at a later time. I think I wrote to you that he had originally prevailed on Margo Russell not to print my replies to his nonsense. She has finally agreed to do so with some editing, and you will see them in the Monday issue, I believe. But Hewitt on receiving from her copies of my, your, and JJF's reply to his remarks, told her that he didn't want his name mentioned and Margo has agreed to the extent that while printing my replies she is deleting reference to ~~their~~ Hewitt. I am really too disgusted with the whole thing to care at this point. I wrote to you last ~~friday~~ that I intended to try to have these articles published elsewhere, but Margo's communication arrived Monday and so I decided to let her run the thing. Tell me, what in your opinion, was the reason why Hewitt asked you re the copper nickel? Incidentally, they were giving die trials to the Coiner and other VIPs in 1913 so your piece probably has a semi-legitimate provenance.

I rang up Phillips Electronics in Mt. Vernon N.Y. this morning in regard to X-ray fluorescence tests, but the person with whom I wanted to speak won't be in until tomorrow. I don't know enough about the difference between the specific gravities of copper and nickel to be able to answer your question. In any case, X-ray fluorescence would be by far the better test and it is likewise non-destructive. But I will discuss the matter with the technician at the lab, so have no misgivings.

The London Chronicle is at the annex Library which is only open until 1:00 on Saturday. I will go again this week and let you know what I can determine. The Sunday Dispatch and the Encyclopedia Americana (1798) are also there which is convenient except for the limited hours of their facilities.

Once again, may I advise you to be circumspect with Hewitt and not lay your cards on the table.

Kindest regards,

  
Don Taxay

P.S. I have received the MacNeil designs from John and they are being photographed. I will let you know

Creators of Distinguished Numismatic Auction Sale Catalogues

under separate cover when I return them to you.

December 19, 1963

Dear Eric:

Regarding Lynn's Confidential story. With as many as 30 errors...there isn't much else to be done except publish corrections. At least the very important ones.

It can probably be worded without doing too much damage to Lynn's image as a researcher. We don't have many real numismatic students coming along as it is. Possibly open with "old myths die hard, etc as to Paul Revere story...then my research on the subject is in different on some points, etc.,...some of the minor things could be covered as additional information, to minimize pointing out Lynn being wrong on too many points.

If I can think of which volume Randall's letter was published in, I'll copy and send to you. Whitman is toying with idea of publishing an index to NSM, drop them a note of encouragement as I could use one myself.

It is of interest that the copper "buffalo" is of the 2nd type. Taxay seems to have it in his head that I have a personal interest in the 1913 pieces. I'm a great believer as far as government officials go in letting sleeping dogs die. If Treasury dept took his book serious they would want to seize every pattern coin struck after 1873. Luckily Dr. Howard, who would do just such a thing, is now involved in another dept.

Sincerely,



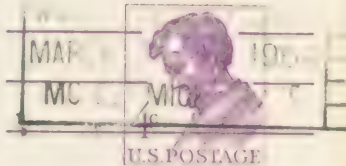


Randall's letter on 1913 in copper  
is on page 727, August 1953  
NSM.

Lee F. H.



THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS



*Eric P Newman*

Eric P. Newman  
6450 Cecil Ave  
St. Louis 5, Mo

june 64



January 27, 1964

Dear Don,

Your letter of January 24 has twelve different subjects, or more. Even I got excited on reading it.

1. As to testifying on the altered 1804 dollar the government usually asks you to do this sort of thing free, however, you better wait until they file charges before you give the matter any further consideration. They may change their mind.

The Favata piece was intriguing to me and I thought that I could get it for my "curiosity box" as I was convinced that he would have no more interest in it after he found out it was an alteration. I seem to have been wrong.

2. I assume from your quotation from the October 1875 AJN that the matter about the Continental dollars turned out to be related to the Continental currency paper money. Trumbull is a well known Connecticut family. The Governor of Connecticut being of that name and Representatives in Congress of that name. I will check it as that is very easy for me.

4. The ledger in the National Archives for 1775 and 1776 could be very exciting as Crosby did not know that he should look for Gallaudet, or for Smithers, etc., who might have done some of the work on the dies or cuts. I hope the microfilm can be obtained and will be glad to pay for it.

3. The rollers I sent you were operated by horses through a gear from underneath which went through the floor. I will send you a print, assuming I remember.

4. The information on the coins I left you is fantastic. I want to see the report and will make a photocopy for you. It looks as though you want to write this situation up as a further blast in the 1913 nickels. I can send you a picture of the case.

5. Please count me in on the present to Breen if he marries.

6. I will write you again tomorrow.

It is loads of fun corresponding with you, as your sense of humor combined with the research bug is a great combination. Wait till you see the pun at the end of the article I ~~xxxxxxx~~ will have in the Numismatist this next issue. (Sorry it is in installments and the pun is at the end)

Keeping slicing the baloney and we will eat our way to the truth.

Yours,



Jan. 28, 1964

Dear Eric,

Thank you ~~again~~ for the new enclosures. You probably have forgotten, but it was I who called the Randall article to your attention a few months ago. As for writing about your nickel, I frankly would not know what to say. The laboratory report is indeed fantastic, but what does it mean? That the coin was struck from a home-made alloy outside the Mint? That the Mint ran out of tin and was using nickel to alloy its bronze? That the Minter and Refiner was non compis mentis? Your guess is as good as mine -- or perhaps better, depending on what it is. I would like very much to run a test on a 1913 Liberty Head nickel, but who would be fool enough to lend me their specimen. Stack's? Perhaps one of the owner's of this coin would trust you sufficiently to allow it to be lent out? What do you think?

When you were here last, you will recall that we talked turkey for a while about Ben Franklin. I have since had the opportunity to go through all the Longacre material, and can add the following: Years before Longacre worked at the Mint he was selected to design the plates for a book on the lives of the Continental Congressmen. He was told, in this connection, that when Congress, in 1782, was in the process of choosing the eagle as a heraldic supporter to the shield, ~~that~~ Franklin jocularly proposed the rattlesnake and the wild turkey as being more appropriate. Although Longacre treated the anecdote as reflecting Franklin's humour, there ~~is~~ are nevertheless two sketches of turkeys (from the head up) among Longacre's drawings of eagles. If you care to use this information, be my guest, but kindly do not pass it on, as the price of research is too high!

In your first ~~article~~ article on the Con. Dols. you say that there is no pertinent information on them in the JCC. What about the PCC and Morris' diary for 1776? Have you personally gone through these two items? Kindly let me know as I intend to research this thing through to its conclusion.

By the way, do you know the nature of Stack's conspiracy ~~conviction~~ conviction, and do you think it would be possible for Arco's lawyers to get copies of this data from the Govt.?

Favata sold the 1804/02 dollar to a man named Heller, who, in attempting to darken the coin in a solution of liver of sulphur, lost the ~~coin~~ lamented 4. It was this Heller who called the Treasury Dept. Favata sold the coin to him after he had received your letters stating that the coin was an alteration, and after I had so published it in Coin Wholesaler, a copy of which he had obtained from Margo Russell. I do not recall the entire chronology of the affair, nor is it necessary, for I am informed that a precedent was set in a western court, many months ago where a man was convicted of ~~being~~ possessing a numismatic alteration, under the regular alteration law. The Government's stand will be that the law always existed and that a "non enforcement" of it by the Treasury department does not ~~render~~ or did not ~~render~~ constitute its non-existence. In short, they do not consider the new interpretation as ~~being~~ rendering previous cases ex post facto. It is a dubious approach, but they have this precedent and apparently feel that the case will not suffer in this respect. I just learned yesterday that Cappola tried to make a quick sale of the piece, or rather a trade, for gold ~~xxx~~ coins at the

Chase Money Museum. It is very important that none of this be published or otherwise bruited about because they have not as yet pinched Cappola and are playing the whole thing with great adroitness. If you cannot hold up your 1804 dollar supplement for a few months, I would ask that you say no more than that the coin was advertised by Messrs. Capolla and Favata, and subsequently (and also previously) debunked. But leave the Government out of the picture. Otherwise it will put me in a bad light as I am their confident in the matter.

I will look forward to your Numismatist article, together with the pun.

I assume Wlater is getting married since he has said so. Subscription price for his scale is \$5. I hope I have ~~not~~ presented a sufficient array of topics to still retain your interest.

Best  
Don

P.S. Have just read the first installment of your article. Very, very interesting.



Dear Eric,

*Tony  
2/1/64*

Since you are determined to have the 1913 experimental nickel written up, I would like the privilege of doing so. The reason is that I have in my possession a genuine 1942-S nickel, type I, and in the regular nickel alloy. ~~It~~ means I have used to authenticate it will make interesting reading. Also, I have the correct mintage figures on the 1909-10 pattern nickels, most of which are unique and not R-8 as Judd says. I will call the article "The World's rarest nickels", or better, "The World's most valuable nickels" or something like that. If, therefore, you can send me a photo of the original Samuel Brown (or is it <sup>the</sup> August Wagner) plush-lined case, plus a snap of each side of your nickel, plus a photocopy of the relevant lab graph, I will appreciate it. I will send you the article for inspection before I submit it to The Numismatist.

Really, Judd ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> v. He says that Patterson died in 1851.



The Service Bureau Corporation  
2511 W. Third Street, Los Angeles, California 90057  
Telephone: DUnkirk 5-8201

Friday, May 15

Mr. Eric Newman  
400 Washington street  
St. Louis, Missouri

Dear Mr. Newman,

Several months ago, I completed a two-year research project involving the Buffalo Nickel and its history. It was published by the Numismatic Journal and was put in the enclosed May and June issues as a two-part article.

The coin has always been a specialty in my nineteen years in numismatics and the article represented my first serious attempt at research.

In all those two years on the project, however, I never did come across any substantiation of the existence of a coin I had heard about once and wanted to include in my work. As you have guessed by now, the coin is the copper specimen of a Buffalo Nickel included in the set of six coins owned by Col. Green. Quite by accident, I have only just recently learned that not only does the coin exist but that you own this unique peice.

Inasmuch as your pending article on the specimen precludes any possibility of my writing on the coin, I would greatly appreciate your informing me of the publication in which your work is to appear. Since the Buffalo Nickel has been so much a part of me for so many years, I am looking forward with a great deal of anticipation to reading your work.

I can't imagine the degree of satisfaction you must feel owning a unique peice of Americana such as the copper Buffalo. I envy you. Thank you very much for your attention and cooperation. I hope you enjoy my article.

Respectfully yours,

Leonard J. Ratzman, ANA #43866  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, California 90660



June 10, 1964

Mr. Leonard J. Ratzman  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, California 90660

Dear Mr. Ratzman:

I have read, with pleasure, your articles on the Buffalo Nickel and its background. I can appreciate the fine research you have done on the subject.

I want you to know that I am not writing up my copper Buffalo nickel, and there is no pending article on the subject, so far as I know. I have so many other pending projects that I had not given it much consideration.

Everybody would laugh at me if they knew that I had this coin in my junk box for years. I had always thought it to be a copper plated coin since the specific gravity was almost identical to a normal issue. It was only a few months ago that it was submitted for chemical analysis by electric defraction. I had always been unwilling to have it analyzed by any surface studies or any method which might harm it. To my great surprise I find it is 95% copper, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ % zinc and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ % tin. I have graphs which were prepared and a lot of technical information which I do not understand.

What else might you know about the coin as you indicate you heard of it.

Please keep up your research and writing as you will get tremendous enjoyment out of it.

Cordially,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

BPN/atb

Monday, June 15

1964

Mr. Eric F. Newman  
400 Washington Avenue  
P.O. Box 14020  
St. Louis, Missouri 63178

RE: Your letter of  
June 10

Dear Mr. Newman,

I am more than pleased that you enjoyed my article. Doing research in numismatics has infinitely increased my interests in coin collecting and has transformed what was once only a hobby into practically an avocation.

I am in the process now of gathering information about your coin but rather than delay this letter until I get the information, I decided it would be better to write you now in lieu of a future correspondence.

Inasmuch as you say you are not planning an article on the specimen, I would consider it an honor and a privilege if, with your permission and cooperation, <sup>you</sup> would allow me to engage in my original idea--that of doing a comprehensive study of the history of your coin and having it published so that the specimen can receive the notoriety it deserves.

Unless you would prefer it otherwise, please be assured that you will receive the major credits and acknowledgements for aiding me in writing the story.

Generally, I would like to know as much about the coin from you as possible (how you came about it, etc.) Also, I would greatly appreciate your sending me copies of all the correspondence, graphs, etc. that you spoke of in your last letter. Naturally, I will incur any of the expenses involved in doing this. Also, do you have a photograph of the coin? Do you have the original case in which the six coins were housed?

In closing, I would like to impress on you how much it would mean to me to be allowed to pursue the history of this coin and culminate that pursuit with a published work. I await your answer with a great deal of anticipation. Thank you for your cooperation and attention.

Respectfully yours,

*Leonard J. Ratzman*

Leonard J. Ratzman AKA #43866  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Fico-Rivera, California 90660



June 18, 1964

Dear Mr. Ratzman:

Thank you for your enthusiastic letter about the 1913 nickel in special copper alloy.

I will be glad to cooperate with you in the furnishing of data concerning the coin if you will consent to my approval of anything before it is published.

I will take a picture of the coin in due course. I have a specific gravity I have taken of it but believe you may want an accurate one taken in a laboratory because it related so "specifically" to the metal content.

I am enclosing photocopies of the applicable parts of the Philips report and I must admit I do not understand them. From these readings there must be a formula for content which someone familiar with this equipment must readily know. I do not wish to bother the lab that made the tests unless it is essential/.

I am enclosing the data on Brown which has never been published in detail. Also some odds and ends.

The original case in which the coins were housed is in my vault with the copper piece in it and also a normal 1913 Type I originally in it. You may not know but the case had eight openings in which there were five 1913 Liberty head nickels, an original Type I, an original Type II and the copper Type II. However the coins had been handled and rehandled so that I actually do not remember whether the Type II piece was in at the time I first saw the case in 1940. The copper piece was always thought to be a fake and for many years I just assumed it was a copper plated normal nickel. There was no way without damaging it to find out until recently.

I have a roll of microfilm from the Archives about the 1913 nickel, but I presume you already have this data. I have never read it.

It will take me time to find all the data I have on the Liberty Head nickels of 1913, but that is not your primary interest. Most of it has been made known to Don Taxay and ~~xx~~ Lee Hewitt etc., anyhow.

Do you receive pay from Lee Hewitt for your articles, for if you do I will not feel so bad if I run up a few small expenses in photography, measurement of sp.gr., etc. If you don't then it will be paid by my educational fund.

I hope you have fun investigating this matter and will be interested in what you turn up.

Sincerely,

Eric P. Newman

Tuesday, June 22

964

Mr. Eric F. Newman  
400 Washington Ave.  
P.O. Box 14020  
St. Louis, Missouri 63178

Dear Mr. Newman,

I wanted to hasten answering your letter of the 18th because there are a few areas which need clarification and explanation.

The first area concerns the obtaining of the specific gravity of the coin. Inasmuch as you already have one and the final resultant article will be aimed at the average numismatist, I feel your specific gravity figures are more than sufficient and no additional laboratory analysis will be necessary.

Secondly, since I have just begun the project, I do not have as much knowledge on the coin's past as I may have mistakenly led you to believe. For instance, I am not familiar with the Samuel W. Brown you included information on, or what connection he had with the specimen. Eventually, I am sure his name will appear in my research as I continue. In addition, I do not have the microfilm from the archives to which you referred but would greatly appreciate your instructing me as to how I might obtain it to add to the rapidly growing file of information I am compiling.

Because the coin was such an integral part of the original set, the final draft of the article will necessarily summarize the occurrences surrounding the Liberty Head specimens too; and thus this side of the story will have to appear even though my primary interest is in your coin and its story.

Lastly, but most important, I want to clarify an erroneous picture I must have created of myself. To begin with,



(2)

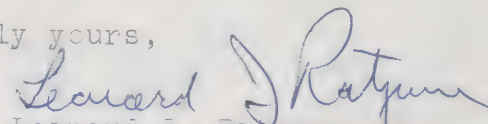
I have not written "articles" as you stated. The research and resultant work in the Numismatic Journal concerning the Buffalo Nickel and its history were my first serious attempt at numismatic research. Moreover, I do not have any affiliation with Mr. Hewitt and the only monetary exchange that occurred was the normal payment for any independent writer whose works are accepted in a copyrighted publication. At this point, I would hasten to add that I do not want you to go to any great expense on my account. Although I am not on an expense account of any kind, I would feel guilty if you had to incur any expense in the obtaining of any of the photographs and/or research material you might send me.

As of this writing, I have gotten off several letters to various sources and in the near future plan to invade our mammoth public library here in Los Angeles, so that your hope of my having fun in this investigation will not go unheard. If I get as much satisfaction this time as I did last, we should come up this time with <sup>SOME THING</sup> ~~that~~ stand them all on their numismatic ears.

Before closing, I assume that your specimen is a proof, is it not? I wanted to make sure for the record.

Unless you have a better idea, I think that the best way to handle the article is that once the final draft with accompanying pictures, etc. has been drawn up, I'll forward the whole thing to you for your approval. Thanks again for everything. I'm looking forward anxiously to your next correspondence. In the meantime, I'm on my way.

Respectfully yours,

  
Leonard J. Ratzman  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, Calif. 90660

June 29, 1964

Dear Mr. Ratzman:

You seem to be an honest researcher and I appreciate your frankness. I knew that you could not have as much information as your prior letter indicated, but I do not want to discourage you in any way. I have started on many subjects with no knowledge and ended up writing a blast as though I was the final authority.

I am enclosing the ads in the Numismatist which relate to Samuel Brown. He apparently got his hands on the copper striking I have as well as the 1913 Liberty Head nickels.

The copper piece is not a proof as the proofs of that period are not really proofs - sand blast proofs they are called - that makes no difference however.

I wish you lots of luck in the Los Angeles library or wherever else you dig but be sure to study all the mint reports and congressional reports to see if there is any thought of changing the metal mix on any of the coins.

The only promise which I want to thank you for is that you will not publish anything without the green light from me as I want whatever is done to be accurate and I do not care whose toes are stepped on.

I am writing Don Taxay who has my microfilm and have asked him to send it to you. Then you can return it to me when you have finished. I have no idea what it contains. There may be other correspondence concerning using variations in metal content which may not be included in this group.

Good luck in your hunt.

Eric P. Newman



# EDISON BROTHERS STORES INC.

EXECUTIVE OFFICES: 400 WASHINGTON AVE. MAIL: P. O. BOX 14020, ST. LOUIS, MO. 63178

June 29, 1964

Dear Mr. Ratzman:

You seem to be an honest researcher and I appreciate your frankness. I knew that you could not have as much information as your prior letter indicated, but I do not want to discourage you in any way. I have started on many subjects with no knowledge and ended up writing a blast as though I was the final authority.

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Good luck in your hunt.

  
Eric P. Newman

Friday, July 3

1964

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
Edison Bros. Stores  
400 Washington Avenue  
St. Louis 2, Missouri

Dear Mr. Newman,

By the time the article is finally published, I will probably have worn out the words thank you. But whenever you send me interesting and usable research material such as this last time, I can't say anything else.

In all the correspondence I've written you so far, I've omitted asking you what will be one of the most important sections in the finished work. I still don't know how and when you came by purchasing the coin originally. I'm sure the details surrounding this transaction would more than interest any reader of the history of the specimen. In addition, and along the same lines, I (and the future readers,) would like to know about you personally. Such things as what position you hold with the Edison Bros. Stores, how long you have been a numismatist, what other numismatic specialties you possess, etc.

Before closing, there's one more thing that I might not find in the months of research ahead and may need from you. Have you ever heard an opinion of or do you know why your specimen is a type II. Inasmuch as the set was presented to Col. Green in early 1913, and the decision to change the design (as far as I know) was not made until late in the year, how do you think they had a "moundless" type II so early?

Thank you again for all the material you are sending me. With your contributions, the article can be nothing but successful.



Leonard J. Ratzman  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, Calif. 90660



July 6, 1964

The address of Mr. Leonard J.  
Ratzman is:

9528 La Docena Lane

Pico-Rivera, Calif. 90660.

*Mrs. Ann Ratzman*

Secretary to  
Mr. Newman

From the desk of  
ERIC P. NEWMAN

August 3, 1964

Mr. Leonard J. Ratzman  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, Calif. 90660

Dear Mr. Ratzman:

Your letter of July 3, 1964 was not responded to because I was on vacation.

I first want to call your attention to the fact that the set of 1913 nickels was not presented to Col. Green in 1913. It did not even appear until 1920 and was probably not acquired by Col. Green until some time between 1928 and 1932.

As far as information about my acquisition of this specimen, it was part of a joint acquisition of a great many coins by B.G.Johnson and myself directly from the estate of Col. E.W.R.Green.

As far as information about me is concerned, this is dull, and if you want to bore yourself, look at the July 8, 1964 COIN WORLD.

I hope you have received the microfilm by now from Don Taxay.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/ath



## MEMORANDUM

August 4, 1964

TO Don Taxay

FROM Eric P. Newman

You have first rights to write up my 1913 nickel, if you want to. I felt you did not want to. Mr. Ratzman, who is working on the subject, is quite inexperienced and may not be able to do a respectable job on the matter. Will you let me know, specifically, if you want to write it up.

I saw an X-ray diffraction spectrometer at the Royal Mint and played with it. It does surface measurements, only, but penetrates to some degree.

EPN/atb

Wednesday, Aug. 5

1964

Mr Eric F. Newman  
400 Washington Ave.  
P.O. Box 14020  
St. Louis, Missouri 63178

Dear Mr. Newman,

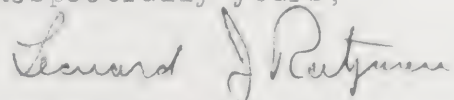
It was quite a coincidence hearing from you when I did. I had just gotten back from the library and had viewed some 90-odd correspondence on Mr. Taxay's microfilm from the Archives. They are very interesting and since there are over 400 letters, notes, etc. on the roll; I will have to make several trips to the library to cover them all.

Since writing you last, I have literally been deluged with useful information concerning the Liberty Head Nickels, but very little about your Buffalo. At almost every source, a fairly complete story of the liberty head is presented which more or less excludes following this line of research. Unless I discovered something revolutionary such as records concerning these coins between 1913 and 1919, there would not be much point in writing what has already been theorized.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Taxay, along with the microfilm says, "...I am sending you, under separate cover, the microfilm of selected correspondence regarding the Buffalo Nickel. I have been working on this subject for some time and will shortly release an article on it." I don't know whether he means the copper specimen or the whole series. When I send the film back, I'll find out.

Thank you for seeing that I got the microfilm. I also enjoyed your article in the coin world.

Respectfully yours,



Leonard J. Ratzman  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, Calif. 90660



THE CHASE MANHATTAN BANK  
MONEY MUSEUM



Rockefeller Center

1254 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10020

11th August 1964

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
400 Washington Avenue  
P. O. Box 14020  
St. Louis, Mo. 63178

Dear Eric:

I enclose a photocopy of the Jarvis petition which you may keep as long as you wish. I am very excited about the Boulton discovery and will write to the library today.

As regards Mr. Ratzman, I have thought it over and agree that it would be best to tell the boy that the material has already been written up and will be released soon in a book. This delicate task I leave to you. I will see you in Cleveland and continue our tete-a-tete.

Cordially,

Donald P. Taxay  
Curator

dpt/kss



THE COLONIAL-AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK  
OF ROANOKE

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

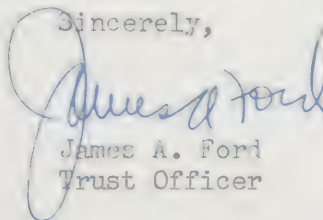
October 6, 1964

Mr. Eric P. Newman, Vice President and Secretary  
Edison Brothers Stores, Inc.  
400 Washington Avenue  
St. Louis 2, Missouri

Dear Mr. Newman:

We are writing you in our capacity as Administrator of the Estate of George O. Walton. As you know, Mr. Walton had been associated with the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel during his lifetime. The members of his family felt that Mr. Walton owned one of these Nickels at his death. However, recent articles indicate that a Mr. Reynolds of Winston-Salem apparently owns the somewhat mysterious "Bolt Nickel." These articles do not say which Mr. Reynolds, and upon inquiry, we do not seem to actually know this to be a fact. I understand that you at one time owned all five of these Nickels and might know who the present owners are. We would very much appreciate any information you might be able to give us on the present ownership of these Nickels and Mr. Walton's association with them. Thank you very much for any help you can give us.

Sincerely,



James A. Ford  
Trust Officer

JAF/em

October 8, 1964

Mr. James A. Ford, Trust Officer  
The Colonial-American National Bank of Roanoke  
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Mr. Ford:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of October 6, 1964 requesting information with respect to the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel allegedly owned by George O. Walton.

While we have much information on the 1913 Liberty Head Nickels, the principal point which I wish to ask you to investigate is to ask Dr. Bolt what was the source of his nickel, namely, the cost, the person from whom it was acquired, the circumstances under which it was acquired, etc.

Since you reported to me over the phone that an altered date 1913 Liberty Head Nickel was found in the Walton Estate, I feel that you should get at the source of the allegedly legitimate nickel before proceeding with more complex investigation.

I hope this will be helpful to you and look forward to receiving your reply with respect thereto.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb



December 30, 1964

Mr. Leonard J. Ratzman  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, Calif. 90660

Dear Mr. Ratzman:

At the end of the year I check up on all open matters and one of those is the microfilm which I loaned to you involving 1913 nickels.

I wonder if you are in a position to return it now.

While you started out very enthusiastically in your venture, to write on this subject, I am sure you ran into a blank wall as to new material.

Will you return the item at your convenience.

Happy New Year.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb



The Service Bureau Corporation  
2511 W. Third Street, Los Angeles, California 90057  
Telephone: 385-8201

Monday, Jan. 4

Mr. Eric P. Newman, Asst. Vice-President  
Edison Brothers Stores, Inc.  
400 Washington Avenue  
St. Louis 2, Missouri

Dear Mr. Newman,

I am very sorry to hear that you have not received your microfilm roll on the buffalo nickel yet. As you can see by the enclosed letter from me to Mr. Taxay, the roll was sent over three months ago to him. I erroneously assumed he would in turn return it to you. By way of a reminder, I am also including a letter you sent me on June 29 informing me that Mr. Taxay had your film and were going to write him requesting he send it to me.

I am sending Mr. Taxay a copy of your most recent letter so that he will send your roll on as soon as possible.

A progress report on my efforts to assemble enough material on the copper buffalo shows that except for a photograph, I feel I have assembled enough to begin work on a rough draft of the article. The fact that my wife became pregnant in the early part of the year and my in-laws visiting us in the latter part has hampered any efforts I would have made to begin the drafting of the first copy of the article. As soon as things settle down, I will definitely begin again and, as per our agreement, send you the rough "final" draft for your approval and/or editing prior to submitting it for publication.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation.

Respectfully yours,

*Leonard J. Ratzman*

Leonard J. Ratzman  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, California 90660

P.S. Congradulations on the successes  
of the baseball and football represen-  
tives of your city.

The Service Bureau Corporation  
2511 W. Third Street, Los Angeles, California 90057  
Telephone: 385-8201

Sunday, Sept. 13

1964

Mr. Donald P. Taxay, Curator  
Money Museum  
Chase Manhattan Bank  
Rockefeller Center  
1254 Avenue of the Americas  
New York 20, New York

Dear Mr. Taxay,

Before going any further, I want to deeply apologize for not returning the enclosed film sooner. But there was such a wealth of information contained in the 300-odd correspondences and I have been so busy that it has taken me this long to finally reach the end.

I am very grateful for the trouble you went to to send me the film. It has added immeasurably to my knowledge of my specialty in numismatics; the Buffalo Nickel.

In case you have not read them, I am enclosing the May and June issues of the Numismatic Journal in which appears a two-part article I did for them on the coin. I would hope that you might enjoy it and/or get some material for your article that you mentioned you were doing.

Thank you again for all your attention and cooperation. I am anxious to see your forthcoming work.

Respectfully yours,

Leonard J. Ratzman, ANA #43866  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, California 90660



January 7, 1965

Mr. Don Taxay  
Chase Manhattan Bank Money Museum  
1254 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, New York

Dear Don:

As to the 1913 Buffalo nickel in experimental copper, I received a letter from Leonard J. Ratzman in which he states that he has assembled enough to get to work on a rough draft of an article and that he will submit a rough draft to me, as he promised, and, also, because I have not released the picture of the item as yet. He also said that he returned the microfilm roll of mine to you.

Naturally, the chances of him writing the thing up are minimal and it is strictly up to you as to whether you want to do so in your book.

If you need my help in the matter, let me know.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb

THE CHASE MANHATTAN BANK



MONEY MUSEUM

Rockefeller Center

14th January 1965

1254 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10020

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
Edison Brothers Stores Inc.  
400 Washington Avenue  
St. Louis 2, Missouri

Dear Eric:

When I spoke with you this morning one of the things I meant to mention was Mr. Ratzman. I am inclined to write to him of the situation before he does anything further. Is this all right with you?

Will attend to the other matters in a couple of days. I am swamped at the moment but wanted to get this note out to you.

Cordially,

Donald P. Taxay  
Curator

dpt/kss

MEMORANDUM

January 15, 1965

TO Mr. Don Taxay

FROM Eric P. Newman

Dear Don:

Okay to write Ratzman.

EPN/atb





THE CHASE MANHATTAN BANK  
MONEY MUSEUM

Rockefeller Center

19th January 1965

1254 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10020

Mr. Leonard J. Ratzman  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, Cal. 90660

Dear Mr. Ratzman:

I have learned from Eric Newman that you intend doing an article on the Buffalo Nickel based on the microfilm I sent you. Please be advised that I have already incorporated all this material in my book on the Mint which will shortly be released for distribution. I suppose you know that it would be necessary to obtain the permission of Mrs. Fraser to reproduce any letters of her late husband.

I am particularly concerned about your desire to publish material on the copper composition nickel of 1913, as I spent a great deal of my own time in having this piece chemically analyzed for Mr. Newman. It seems to me I wrote you some time ago about my intentions on this matter, but perhaps I was not sufficiently explicit. I thought I would just let you know all this to save you from wasting unnecessary effort.

Very truly yours,

Donald P. Taxay  
Curator

dpt/kss



The Service Bureau Corporation  
2511 W. Third Street, Los Angeles, California 90057  
Telephone: 385-8201

Tuesday, Jan. 26

1965

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
Edison Brothers Stores, Inc.  
400 Washington Avenue  
P.O. Box 14020  
St. Louis, Missouri 63178

Dear Mr. Newman,

As you can see by the copy of Mr. Taxay's letter enclosed, it looks as if the last chapter has been written concerning my intentions to write an article on your copper buffalo.

In the beginning (using all your aid and encouragement,) I felt the eventual work would be quite feasible to accomplish. When Mr. Taxay wrote me saying he was doing an article already, I understood him to mean that his work was going to be on the Liberty Head series and would not include the copper buffalo.

Obviously, I was incorrect. I have already written him apologizing for leaving him with the impression I was going to encroach on his research and efforts in this matter by "beating him to the punch" with an article of ~~his~~ <sup>my</sup> own.

As I told him in my letter; I don't feel as if the time I have spent went in vain. Since the ultimate goal of any serious numismatist is to learn everything about his specialty, the knowledge I've gained through people like you and Mr. Taxay has been invaluable under any circumstances.

Since now I will not be able to write the article, I am looking forward to the book Mr. Taxay mentions in the enclosed letter. It should prove very interesting.

Thank you for all you've done for me. I hope we can meet someday so that we can talk over the many subjects I'm sure we'd cover.

Leonard J. Ratzma  
9528 La Docena Lane  
Pico-Rivera, Calif. 90660



# THE *Hollydale Chiropractic Center*

13601 PARAMOUNT BLVD. • SOUTH GATE, CALIFORNIA • PHONE 634-8212

July 5, 1966

Dear Mr. Cooper,

In your capacity of Exhibit Chairman of the upcoming St. Louis Coin Festival, I am addressing this letter of inquiry to you. Recently I noticed your announcement of the first public display of the 1913 Buffalo Nickel in copper. Since 1958 I have been trying to locate this coin, mainly for inspection, and I would like to know if possible several answers in my mind.

To begin with, I am in the midst of compiling and writing a monolog the die varieties and major changes of the early buffalo nickels, and the 1913 in particular. Thus naturally, your announcement in the Scrapbook caught my eye.

If it is at all possible I would like to contact the present owner of the coin or pass this letter on to him. Or, as an alternate, a sharp and clear color photo would suffice providing a few questions could be answered. First; Is this the coin in the set of 1913 Liberty nickels owned by Col. Green? If so is this coin still pedigreed? Secondly; Is it a Type I or a Type II? Third; is the motto 'Liberty' sharply defined and struck as say a 1935 Buffalo or is it similar to all other 1913 nickels, that is rather weak and not well defined?

Actually there are several other varied and important questions regarding this specimen however these simple queries will do for the present. Please try to contact the owner for me and express my desire to actually inspect the coin for cataloging purposes.

(cont.)





# THE *Hollydale Chiropractic Center*

13601 PARAMOUNT BLVD. • SOUTH GATE, CALIFORNIA • PHONE 634-8212

2.

That about covers everthing except thanking you for your time and consid-  
eration .

One final item, is the coin for sale at any price? If so please have the  
owner contact me. Thanx again,

Numismatically yours,

Dr. Donald W. Bach



# SCOTCHMAN COINS, INC.

6517 NATURAL BRIDGE  
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

July 14 1966

Dear Eric:

Hope you had a nice vacation and are all ready for the troubles of the World.

Enclosed is a letter I received from a Dr. Bach regards your 1913 Copper Buffalo Nickel that I am sure you will be able to answer. Looks like he might be interested in it.

Plans for the Show are going real well and from all indications this one will be THE TOPS as far as we can see.

Best regards

*Dave Cooper*  
-----  
D.L.Cooper



# THE *Hollydale Chiropractic Center*

13601 PARAMOUNT BLVD. • SOUTH GATE, CALIFORNIA • PHONE 634-8212

July 26, 1966

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
6450 Cecil Avenue  
St. Louis, Missouri

Re: 1913 Buffalo Nickel in Copper

Dear Mr. Newman:

First I wish to thank you for your kind and personal response to earlier correspondence concerning this nickel. Also I wish to thank you and your Educational Society for offering to assist me in my efforts in compiling information.

Due to the fact that I will not be able to attend the upcoming St. Louis Coin Festival and consequently will be unable to inspect the nickel, I am writing for more information.

To begin with, I might first start with explaining why I am interested in this coin. I am of the opinion that this particular coin was manufactured along with the 1913 Liberty Nickels. If so, I feel that I have proof positive that these coins were minted in 1916 or after.

There are several major and minor distinct, definite and permanent die changes in the early buffalo nickels, heretofore unlisted. For the past several years I have been toying with the idea of writing on them and correlating them with the 1913 Copper Buffalo Nickel. In this manner, I feel that I could just about date the manufacture of the 1913 Copper coin and therefore shed light on the date of manufacture of the 1913 Liberty Nickels as well.

Now, a few more queries; Is this coin presently slated to be on display on the West Coast in the near future? If not, would you consider, upon proper certification and references, sending the coin to myself or my bank for inspection? If this is not possible, a set of sharp, clear, color photographs might suffice.

Also, I wish to prevail upon your files concerning this specimen. Any pertinent data, that is, pedigrees, analysis, purchase place and date, etc. would also be of assistance.

(cont.)





# THE *Hollydale Chiropractic Center*

13601 PARAMOUNT BLVD. • SOUTH GATE, CALIFORNIA • PHONE 634-8212

(2)

With this information I would feel totally equipped to embark on the task of writing an 'expose' on these fantasy pieces.

Once agian, thanking you for your for your earlier letter, and for due consideration on this matter, I remain,

Cordially and Enthusiastically,

Donald W. Bach, D.C.

DWB/le

August 1, 1966

Dr. Donald W. Bach  
The Hollydale Chiropractic Center  
13601 Paramount Blvd.  
South Gate, California

Dear Dr. Bach:

I looked up my memoranda and I find that the content of my 1913 Type II Nickel is 95% copper, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ % nickel and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ % zinc. It contains no tin.

Your theory as to 1916 as a possible manufacturing date is a matter which I doubt but greater power to you.

It certainly would be interesting to have you write up the material in preliminary form so that I can study the piece with that in mind.

The next time I do photography, I will take a picture of it. The coin will not be on display on the West Coast in the near future and, for the present, I do not think it is practical to send it out. I will check my files further to see if there is anything which will be helpful to you other than the detailed metal analysis. The pedigree and acquisition data is of no importance as I cannot trace it back farther than Colonel Green's acquisition of the group of fantasy nickels.

In Don Taxay's original book on counterfeits, etc. and his modern book on the History of the Mint you will find some material on it which I furnished him. I have a microfilm of all correspondence relating to nickels in 1913.

When you get around to it, write up your thinking and let us study it from the point of view of helping you complete it for publication.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb

RT 3 Box 327

Salem, Va. 24153  
March 26, 1969

Dear Mr. Newman:

While looking through some letters, etc. belonging to my late brother, George Walton, I came across a letter from you relative to the 1913 Liberty Head Nickels. Some questions have arisen, and I was wondering if I could prevail upon your time and kindness to answer them.

Did you ever see my brother's collection? the Nickel? Stella gold? Is there a doubt in your mind as to the authenticity of the Nickel; if so, where is the fifth nickel? Did you ever see his material on the history of this nickel?

I am enclosing an envelope for your reply, and any information will be greatly appreciated and rewarded, if profitable.

Thanks.

Sincerely

*M. Stella Greene*

(Mrs. Robt. R.)

mg  
Enc.



PT 3 Bnt 327

Salem, Va. 24153  
March 26, 1969

Dear Mr. Newman:

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Did you ever see my brother's collection? the Nickel? Stella gold? Is there a doubt in your mind as to the authenticity of the Nickel; if so, where is the fifth nickel? Did you ever see his material on the history of this nickel?

I am enclosing an envelope for your reply, and any information will be greatly appreciated and rewarded, if profitable.

Thanks.

Sincerely

*Melva Greene*  
(Mrs. Robt. R.)

mg  
Enc.

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

March 31, 1969

Mrs. Robert R. Givens  
Rt. 3, Box 327  
Salem, Virginia 24153

Dear Mrs. Givens:

We are fully aware of the problem you have on hand and can understand why you are doing a lot of investigating. We presume the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel which George Walton was supposed to have has never shown up.

In answer to your specific questions, I can state that I never saw your brother's collection. I never saw in his possession the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel which he allegedly owned. I know nothing whatever of the Stella about which you write.

There was never any doubt in my mind that the nickel which he acquired was one of the five 1913 Liberty Head Nickels and I don't know where that nickel is now. I never had the opportunity of seeing his material on the history of the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel in spite of requesting it.

Originally, all five 1913 Liberty Head Nickels were here in St. Louis, in my possession. We still have the holder in which they were kept. We still have a couple of the coins which were in the holder with them. We also have a large file on the history of the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel.

There certainly is a lot of mystery in your side of the situation and I presume that you are investigating to see whether there is something unsavory in connection with the matter.

We hope we have been helpful.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb

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There certainly is a lot of mystery in your side of the situation and I presume that you are investigating to see whether there is something unsavory in connection with the matter.

We hope we have been helpful.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb



January 12, 1971

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
6450 Cecil Avenue  
St. Louis, Missouri 63105

Dear Eric:

I am returning to you with deep appreciation the items borrowed for our program on the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel. We had the presentation last evening and it went over fine.

Enclosed are the following items:

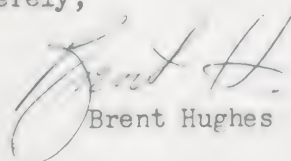
- Mehl's Coin Chronicle publication.
- New York Numismatic Year Book of 1922
- The holder for the 1913 nickels with the type 1 nickel uncirculated replaced in the hole.
- Xerox of the narrative used with the slides. When you have time to read it, I would appreciate any comments, additions, or deletions you might care to make.
- A color slide of the holder with the nickels "faked in" (Plus other photos)  
to show the holder as it must have looked to Green.

The matter of George Walton's coin is still a mystery. We know now that George had five fake nickels, each in a plastic holder with inscription, which he handed out at one time or another and apparently represented as the "genuine" item. Very odd person. Where the mint product is - nobody is saying. Rumors . . . . .

I suppose you are deep in your CSA counterfeit project. Feel free to keep my album as long as you wish - I have just picked up a few more but feel they all are duplicates of the album items.

Again, thank you for the loan.

Sincerely,

  
Brent Hughes

3230 Nealon Drive  
Falls Church, Va. 22042

- THE 1913 LIBERTY HEAD NICKEL -

(Narrative to precede showing of the slides)

"As long as man is attracted by the unknown and beguiled by dreams of wealth, the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel will remain a symbol of mystery and hope. Few coins have been born under more clouded circumstances; none lives in an atmosphere more bright, with promise." These words probably more than any other summarize the deep feeling of the late J. V. McDermott for his beloved "Miss Liberty", and certainly we mean no personal criticism of Mr. McDermott if we take exception to part of his message. The 1913 Liberty Head Nickel will remain a symbol of mystery, but not of hope. It was most assuredly born under clouded circumstances, but those circumstances have not been changed one bit by the passage of time. The coin lives today in the same clouded atmosphere in which it was born.

Actually, if we wish to be technical about it, the 1913 Liberty Head nickel does not exist at all. If you were to write to the Mint tomorrow about this coin, you would probably receive the same answer that has been given out for years - "no Liberty Head nickels dated 1913 were officially issued by the United States Government." As numismatists we know that a coin is a piece of metal marked and issued by governmental authority to be used as money; therefore by definition the 1913 Liberty Head nickel is not a coin, it never was and it never can be. Technically it is nothing but a token. It is a tragedy of numismatics that collectors are still willing to pay huge prices for these so-called coins. Many of us have seen the coin, attended the ANA convention where one was sold, or at least been part of a whole generation of Americans which actually believed that many of these coins were in circulation just waiting to be discovered.

But for the moment let's put aside our contempt for this piece of metal, for the sake of convenience let's call it a coin, and explore its fascinating history from birth to present day. For woven in the fabric of its existence we will find some of the best-known names in numismatics today, plus some little-known individuals, and for good measure, a couple of scoundrels and perhaps an eccentric or two. It is an interesting story, still inconclusive and still mysterious.

It was six years after 1913 as a matter of fact before hardly anyone suspected that such a coin even existed. First public mention occurred in a small ad in the December 1919 issue of "The Numismatist" magazine, the official publication of the American Numismatic Association. The ad did not offer the coin for sale, but rather offered to buy the coin "in proof condition if possible" for \$500. The ad continued in the January, February and March 1920 issues with the price upped to \$600. Then silence. The ad was signed by one Samuel W. Brown of North Tonawanda, N. Y. The ad created little interest - after all, who was Samuel W. Brown? And why would anyone run an ad offering to buy a coin that did not exist? No one knew but Brown, theoretically. Then at the ANA Convention in Chicago in August, 1920, who should show but Mr. Samuel W. Brown, with five of the coins. He put one on exhibit at the convention. In the October issue of "The Numismatist" we find the following report, "Samuel W. Brown of North Tonawanda, New York, was present for a short time on Monday. He had with him a specimen of the latest great rarity in U. S. coinage, the nickel of 1913 of the Liberty Head type. It was among the exhibits of the Convention, with a label announcing that it was valued at \$600, which amount Mr. Brown



announced he is ready to pay for all proof specimens offered to him. An explanation of its rarity is that at the close of 1912, the Mint authorities not having received orders to use the dies of the Buffalo type nickel at the beginning of 1913, prepared a master die of the Liberty Head type dated 1913, and from this master die a few pieces, believed to be five, in proof were struck. None of these are believed to have been placed in circulation."

If Mr. Brown came to the ANA convention with the idea of selling his nickels, he was disappointed. He took four of the coins back home with him, and made arrangements with Alden Scott Boyer, president of the Chicago Coin Club, to pick up the fifth nickel when the convention closed. Boyer kept it for several months and returned it to Brown insured for \$500. So in 1921 we find Mr. Brown back in New York State with all five nickels. Now, of course, comes the question - where did these coins originate and how did Brown acquire them? For the answers let us proceed in two directions - the official records of the Mint, and the biography of Mr. Brown.

In the Mint records, we find these facts. Near the end of 1912, the Mint was preparing to bring out the new James E. Fraser Indian and Buffalo nickel design. On December 13, 1912, Mint Director George Roberts instructed the Superintendent of the Philadelphia Mint John H. Landis to make no preparations for the coinage of any 1913 five cent pieces until the new designs were ready. Now in following normal procedures, Roberts had already had the dies for the 1913 Liberty Head nickel made and locked in his vault. On December 26, 1912, hubs for the new Buffalo nickel were received by the engraver at the Philadelphia Mint. Roberts again instructed his superintendent to do nothing about coinage until formal approval of the new designs was received.

On January 18, 1913, Director Roberts further instructed his Superintendent of the Philadelphia Mint as follows: "Replying to yours of the 17th instant I beg to say that you will not forward any working dies for the new five-cent nickel piece to the other mints until instructions to that effect are given. Do nothing about any coinage at Philadelphia until you receive formal instructions to that effect. The new design has not been formally approved."

This formal approval was received on February 19, 1913, and actual coinage of the Buffalo nickel began on February 21, 1913. So somewhere in the vaults at Philadelphia lay the dies for a 1913 Liberty Head nickel, a coin never to be officially issued. The stage was set for the illegal activity. Five coins were made from those dies. The question is when? Logic says 1912, and in the Mint itself. One theory is this - it is standard practice for any engraver to make trial pieces to see if his dies are correct. There is no reason to think that this was not done in the case of the 1913 Liberty Heads. Satisfied that his dies were as they should be, the engraver then stored the dies and the trial pieces in the vault. But here is a strange fact - the Mint has no record of such dies, even though every die is supposed to be numbered, signed for and enumerated and recorded at the end of the year.

Another theory that has been mentioned is that a friend of Brown could have gotten to the dies as late as 1919 and used Mint presses to make the coins. This is hard to accept. First of all, the risk of detection would have been great. It is hard to believe that it could have been done this way without more than one employee in on the deal.

Before you accept any of the theories, we should look into the personality

of Mr. Brown. What do we know of him? One very important fact - he was an employee of the Philadelphia Mint, going to work there on December 18, 1903. And in April, 1906, he joined the ANA as member number 808. He resigned from the Mint on November 14, 1913. Question - did he have access to the vaults? Perhaps he did, for we find in his personnel file that he served as assistant curator of the Mint Collection from 1904 to 1907. Now since he joined the ANA during this tenure, we can assume that he was familiar with coin values. It is also safe to assume that as he handled the rarities in the Mint Collection he was quite conscious of their numismatic value. So if we accept the theory that the coins were made in 1912 or early 1913, the possibility exists that he took the coins out when he left. Let us pose a hypothetical situation - Mr. Brown somehow discovered that the Mint had not recorded the fact that dies and trial pieces of the 1913 Liberty Head nickels had been made. He also discovered the dies and coins in the vault. Since they were not on inventory, it became a simple matter to take them home when he left the Mint employment, hide them away for six years to see if they were ever missed, and when they were never mentioned, felt safe to bring them out in 1919. But he must have been a cagey fellow, for he did not simply offer them for sale. Instead he placed his ad as an offer to buy, knowing full well that he could have no takers. Six months later he could show up at the ANA convention with five of the coins and most people would assume that he had bought the coins as a result of his ad.

In all probability we will never know for sure, for Mr. Brown passed on to that great bourse table in the sky in 1944, taking his secret with him. Everyone else involved in the 1913 episodes are also dead now.



But we know this, absolutely. There is no official record of dies, trial pieces, or any other evidence of legality. In fact, we have recorded the specific injunction of the then Director of the Mint forbidding the production of such coins. As Don Taxay says in his book, "Counterfeit Mis-struck and Unofficial U. S. Coins", the confiscation of a 1933 twenty-dollar gold piece on the grounds that it was issued without authority was upheld by the courts and set a precedent by which 1804 dollars, 1884-85 Trade Dollars and 1913 Liberty Head Nickels could likewise be seized without compensation. It is unfortunate that circumstances have placed these coins in such a position in the public's mind that fortunes are offered for them. Let us see how these circumstances came about.

Brown kept his five coins for awhile and sometime before 1924 he sold them to a Philadelphia stamp dealer named August Wagner. Perhaps you will attach some significance to the fact that Wagner was located in the same city as the Mint - some say that he may have known something about the making of the coins. We will never know. Apparently it was August Wagner who had a special black leather plush-lined case made for the coins. This case contained eight coins - five 1913 Liberty Head nickels, a copper strike of the Buffalo nickel, and one each uncirculated 1913 Buffalo raised ground variety and the recessed variety. So far as we can determine this is the same case that was sold to Ned Green for \$2,000 thru B. G. Johnson of St. Louis. The case is now owned by the Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society with a label which states, "The original leather holder made specially to hold the following coins: Five 1913 Liberty Head Nickels, one buffalo nickel type I dated 1913; one buffalo nickel type II dated 1913; the buffalo nickel type II in copper alloy dated 1913."

The first indication that Wagner had the coins was when he ran an ad in the January, 1924 issue of "The Numismatist", unpriced in the ad but sold for \$2,000 to Ned Green. When Green died, his coins were consigned to B. G. Johnson, a St. Louis dealer. Johnson offered the coins to several other dealers, including one named B. Max Mehl. Now it was Max Mehl who was responsible for building up the 1913 nickel into a nationally-known item. Max apparently had always been fascinated by the coin, and during the twenties and thirties he convinced the American public that the coin could be found in circulation and that he would pay \$50 for every one sent to him. During the great depression, \$50 looked very big indeed. We will see Mr. Mehl in the slides in a few minutes. He is a story in himself. Max once said, "When Johnson had them I saw them all and was offered the entire lot for \$3,500. Being an expert (?) numismatist, I offered him \$2,500 for the lot. Just a little over two years later, I sold a single specimen, the Olson, for \$3,750."

Unsuccessful in his efforts to sell the coins as a set, Johnson decided to break up the set and sell them individually. From this point the coins travelled around quite a bit and we can trace their journey best by going to our slides.

- SLIDES NARRATIVE -

- Slide No. 1 -(Washington Numismatic Society Emblem)
- Slide No. 2 - (Title Slide - The 1913 Liberty Head Nickel)
- Slide No. 3 - "First mention to the public of the existence of the 1913 Liberty Head nickel occurred in the December 1919 issue of "The Numismatist", official publication of the American Numismatic Association. Here is the familiar blue cover used by this magazine for years."
- Slide No. 4 - "Close-up of the cover, showing the date."
- Slide No. 5 - "And the page inside with the first ad."
- Slide No. 6 - "Close-up of the ad."
- Slide No. 7 - "Closer still. Notice the word "Wanted" in large letters. Apparently this was important to Mr. Brown's plan. Note also the price he offered - \$500. "
- Slide No. 8 -"The ad was continued in this January, 1920 issue, with the price raised to \$600 as shown in this . . . "
- Slide No. 9 - "Close-up of the January ad."
- Slide No. 10- "And the ad is again in the February issue."
- Slide No. 11- "Close-up of the February ad."
- Slide No. 12- "Finally, in the March, 1920 issue we see the last ad. . ."
- Slide No. 13- "Close-up we can see that Mr. Brown persists in asking for 'proof condition if possible'."
- Slide No. 14- "The next published mention in an ad occurred in the January, 1924 issue of "The Numismatist". August Wagner was the Philadelphia stamp dealer who apparently was the one who had the leather holder made to house the five 1913 Liberty Head nickels and the three Buffalo nickels, including the copper specimen. Notice that no price is given, but we do know that Wagner sent the set to B. G. Johnson in St. Louis who then passed it on to Ned Green."
- Slide No. 15-"The leather holder with the nickels improvised in to give us some idea of how the contents must have looked to Ned Green."
- Slide No. 16- "Close-up of the holder and the famous coins."
- Slide No. 17- "We can best trace the journey of the various nickels down thru the years by using a chart. This is what the complete chart looks like, too small to see the individual steps. So taking the chart a part at a time, we see . . . "



Slide No. 18 - "The first section, which traces the set of coins from Mr. Brown to August Wagner to B. G. Johnson, who sold the set intact to this man . . ."

Slide No. 19 - "Col. E. H. R. Green, son of the famous Hetty Green, the so-called Witch of Wall Street. The story of Hetty Green, her daughter and her son, is the subject of a good book that might be of interest to you, "The Day They Shook the Plum Tree" by Arthur Lewis. It is now a Bantam paperback number N3972 which costs 95¢ at Brentanos. You will find it very fascinating reading. Briefly, Hetty was the heiress to a family fortune that was started in 1624 at Plymouth, Massachusetts with one black cow. Thru farming, Indian trade, slavery, land sales, rum, Russian iron, shipping and primarily whaling, the fortune reached sizable proportions before Hetty got it. She could read and understand stock market reports when she was six years old, and as she grew older she became the most hated person on Wall Street by virtue of her stinginess on the one hand, and such things as charging 30% interest on huge loans to desperate business men on the other. When she died in 1916, she was the richest woman in the United States, leaving an estate of \$100 million to her son, Ned. Ned was six feet four inches tall, weighed 300 pounds, and seemed as determined to spend the money as his mother had been determined to acquire it. He spent \$3 million a year on yachts, coins, stamps, Texas politics, and girls, not necessarily in that order."

Slide No. 20 - "Here is Ned in one of his cars, built with a high roof so that he could get in and out with his wooden leg. He used to drive his car up to the curb on Nassau Street in New York City and the stamp dealers would bring their material out to him. Incidentally, he had a rest room built right into the car. Ned's sister, Sylvia, also shared in her mother's will. She is best remembered for her odd banking practices. She kept \$31 million in an interest-free checking account. It really did the bank little good, however, because she had one trait that she inherited from her mother. She might walk in one morning and demand the whole account in cash - Hetty did this many times in her career - it drove the bankers wild."

Slide No. 21 - "Portrait of the famous Hetty Green, Ned's mother."

Slide No. 22 - "Portrait of Hetty Green from the cover of the book, 'The Day They Shook the Plum Tree!'"

Slide No. 23 - "Close-up of the same portrait."

"Ned Green died in 1936, or rather just wore himself out with high living, and the estate became involved in the courts. In 1942, B. G. Johnson bought the coin collection and sought a buyer for the set of nickels at \$3,500. He failed to find one, and decided to break up the set."

- Slide No. 24 - "Back to our chart. Coin No. 1, we see the first buyer. . ."
- Slide No. 25 - "Mr. Eric P. Newman of St. Louis, who bought what we will call Coin No. 1 when the set was broken up. Mr. Newman is a well-known numismatist, founder of the Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society of St. Louis, author of "The Early Paper Money of America" and many other books and articles on numismatics."
- Slide No. 26 - "Our chart shows that Mr. Newman turned his coin over to . . ."
- Slide No. 27 - "Mr. Abe Kosoff, well-known dealer of California and author of many fine articles on numismatics. Mr. Kosoff handled the sale of the Newman coin in 1943 to . . ."
- Slide No. 28 - "Mr. Louis Eliasberg of Baltimore. The famous Eliasberg Collection is one of the most complete in the world. He has exhibited parts of his collection in this area at various times."
- Slide No. 29 - "Back to our chart, the coin we call No. 2 was purchased from B. G. Johnson by . . ."
- Slide No. 30 - "This man, F.C.C. Boyd of New York City. Mr. Boyd was another of those quiet individuals who did not have too many photographs made of himself. This one appeared on a medal struck by the New York Numismatic Club when Mr. Boyd was President of that group. Born in Kentucky in 1874, he left home at age 13 and became a print shop helper. He went up thru the business world, finding his way to New York City where he became an executive with the Union News Co. He collected paper money, gold, medals, store cards, encased postage stamps, fractional currency, and books. His collections were famous at the time, and many of the older coin dealers in New York remember him well. . ."
- "Mr. Boyd's nickel went to Abe Kosoff who sold it in 1944 to. . ."
- Slide No. 31 - "King Farouk of Egypt. His Majesty was a much-despised king, collected many things and made a lot of mistakes. One of his most serious errors was approving the admission of a young Egyptian soldier named Ahmed Abdul Nasser to the War College. When Farouk was thrown out, the Egyptian government disposed of his coin collection in 1954 at the Koubbeh Palace in Cairo. The 1913 nickel was part of Lot No. 1695 - a complete collection of uncirculated nickels from 1866 to 1948-D - all more or less dumped into a cigar box unprotected by holders. . . This lot was bought by an American dealer . . ."
- Slide No. 32 - "Our chart shows the sale to our old friend . . ."
- Slide No. 33 - "Sol Kaplan of Cincinnati, a well-known dealer. He in turn sold the coin to Mr. Henry Norweb of Cleveland, Ohio. Mr. Norweb was a career diplomat for 35 years, and he shared his collecting hobby with his wife . . ."
- Slide No. 34 - "Mrs. Norweb, who is listed by some publications as the present owner of the nickel."



- Slide No. 35 - "Back to our chart again. Coin No. 3 as well as No. 4 and 5, were bought by . . . "
- Slide No. 36 - "Mr. James Kelly, a well-known dealer of Dayton, Ohio."
- Slide No. 37 - "Mr. Kelly sold coin No. 3 to Mr. Fred Olsen of Altona, Illinois who turned it over to this man, B. Max Mehl of Dallas, Texas, or as he wished to be known, 'The Texas Money King'. More than any other man, Mehl made the coin hobby what it is today by making the public conscious of coins as something other than a medium of exchange."
- Slide No. 38 - "Another portrait of B. Max Mehl. Old-timers among us well remember Mr. Mehl and his advertising campaign during the thirties."
- Slide No. 39 - "Here is Mehl in his office, dictating to his secretary."
- Slide No. 40 - "Close-up view of the same photo."
- Slide No. 41 - "View of the mail order room at Max Mehl's shop. Twenty-five women busy mailing out a famous publication . . . "
- Slide No. 42 - "The Star Rare Coin Encyclopedia, which you might call the first 'Red Book' except that the prices listed were those that Mehl would pay for the coins sent to him. In response to Mehl's advertising campaign, thousands of people sent in a dollar to get their copy. Mehl's profits from these sales must have been tremendous, considering the low printing costs during the depression."
- Slide No. 43 - "It was in this coin book that Mehl listed his famous offer of \$50 for the 1913 Liberty Head nickel. He received thousands of fake coins, Buffalo nickels dated 1913, but no authentic 1913 Liberty Heads. "
- Slide No. 44 - "Another ad of Mehl's. The prices look ridiculous now, but remember that very few people had the money to put into a hobby."
- Slide No. 45 - "And another ad. Right now most of us are thinking, 'Boy, if I had only bought then . . . "
- Slide No. 46 - "Mr. Mehl sold the coin No. 3 to King Farouk for \$3,750. Shortly thereafter King Farouk acquired Coin No. 2 for \$1,000 less, so he returned this coin No. 3 to Mehl who then sold it to . . . "
- Slide No. 47 - "Mr. Edwin Hydeman of New York who paid \$3,750 for the coin, and he still has it today. He did offer it at auction at the 1965 ANA Convention in Los Angeles with a reserve of \$50,000. It did not sell, and there are no published reports of his offering it since."
- Slide No. 48 - "So our chart shows the present location of Coin No. 3."



- Slide No. 49 - "Now our chart shows us that Coin No. 4 was sold by Mr. Kelly to our old friend . . . "
- Slide No. 50 - "J. V. McDermott in 1943 for \$900. McDermott had a lot of fun with his coin, taking it to coin show after coin show in his pocket, passing it around for all to see. He wouldn't be foolish enough to do that today. . . "
- Slide No. 51 - "Here's a close-up of Mac with his beloved coin . . . "
- Slide No. 52 - "When Mac died, his widow turned the coin over to Jim Kelly who auctioned it off at the 1967 ANA show in Miami."
- Slide No. 53 - "The coin was bought for \$46,000 by Mr. Aubrey Beebe, the famous dealer, who has placed a price tag of \$100,000 on it, and has reportedly turned down an offer of \$80,000. Mr. Beebe therefore is listed as the present owner of Coin No. 4."
- Slide No. 54 - "Our chart shows Coin No. 5 as it was bought by Mr. Kelly in 1943 who in turn sold it to . . . "
- Slide No. 55 - "Dr. Conway Bolt of Marshville, North Carolina for \$1,000. Dr. Bolt is a past president of MANA and is well known in numismatics. Dr. Bolt then quietly sold or traded his coin to another man well-known to many of us, the fabulous . . . "
- Slide No. 56 - "George Walton of Roanoke, Virginia. This man is a story all by himself. A banker, George put together a great collection of coins, currency, guns, and probably many other items. Most notable was his huge collection of Bechtler gold. He was killed in an auto accident around 1962. His collection of coins and currency was sold by order of the Administrator of the Colonial-American National Bank of Roanoke by Stack's, the famous New York coin firm. This huge sale took place in October, 1963 and realized a total of \$874,836. Oddly enough, Walton's 1913 nickel was not in this sale, and just why it wasn't has never been published. There are rumors that in addition to his authentic 1913 coin, George had some fake nickels, perhaps as many as five. It is said that one of these fakes went to Stack's, who returned it to the estate. So we must simply list Coin No. 5 as still in the Walton estate, although there is a persistent rumor that George sold his coin prior to his death and the present owner is simply keeping his mouth shut. These are strictly rumors that I have heard, and no proof exists to my knowledge."
- Slide No. 57 - "So there we have it. The story of the mysterious 1913 nickel. And we close on still another mystery. All thru the history of this coin we hear the term "proof". I saw only the McDermott coin and it certainly was not proof surface - in fact it was quite rough. Look at this close-up of a photo of the coin. See the heavy pits and evidence of damage. How did this occur if this coin was once a proof? Perhaps some of you know. . . "

Slide No. 58 - "Another close-up. In a moment we can discuss the possibilities of this condition. But for now, let me say this. If you should ever be offered one of these coins, please assume that it is a fake. Any good jeweler can make one by taking a 1903 nickel and removing the zero and soldering on a one, or taking a 1912 and changing the two to a three. How do I know this? The largest maker of plastic holders in this country still gets orders for at least 15 of the 1913 nickel holders each year and has been for twenty years. Add it up and see how many fakes are around in a custom-made holder. And it is shame because they aren't even counterfeit coins, just fakes of a fake . . . "

Slide No. 59 - "Let me give credit where credit is due. We express our appreciation to Mrs. Margo Russell of "Coin World"; Mr. Eric P. Newman of St. Louis; The Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society; and "COINage Magazine" for their assistance in the preparation of this program."

Slide No. 60 - ( Close-up of the nickel ) "Thank you."

- The End -



ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

January 18, 1971

Mr. Brent Hughes  
3230 Nealon Dr.  
Falls Church, Va. 22042

Dear Brent:

Thank you, so much, for the copy of your 1913 Liberty Head nickel program. It indicates true devotion to a cause and shows how much work went into its preparation. Congratulations.

Thank you for the exciting pictures. It is only proper that the holder pictures should have been faked to keep the moral tone uniform.

You asked for comments on your program, suggesting additions and deletions, so here they are:

1. Wagner never sent the coins to Johnson. Johnson had no part in the sale to Green. Wagner probably sold the coins to Green directly or through Wayte Raymond, on whom Green relied. Who said the price was \$2000 to Green?

2. The 1913 Liberty Head nickel is not a token, in my opinion. It is either a spurious coin deliberately made at the mint from dies made for the purpose from existing hubs and punches, or a genuine trial piece illegally removed from the mint, or an illegal strike from prepared dies which pieces were illegally removed from the mint. It is at best in the pattern class. There are many rarer patterns and trials.

3. Johnson did not buy all the Green coins, only some of them. I negotiated the purchase from the Green Estate of all that he bought because I was accidentally the first customer of the Green Estate pieces. Nothing was consigned to Johnson for sale. It was all bought outright.

4. I think you should give a little more emphasis to the 95% copper, 2½% zinc, 2¼% nickel Type II piece in the group. It is a trial and is unique, but naturally was made



ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

-2-

January 18, 1971

Mr. Brent Hughes

in 1913. Until nondestructive analysis came along, I assumed it was a copper plated regular nickel and had it in my fake box. Maybe it still belongs there, but it is much more legitimate than the Liberty Heads, in my opinion, and much rarer.

5. Johnson was not unsuccessful in selling the coins as a set. He was teasing Mehl because Mehl had advertised for the coins for years and had never seen one. Johnson knew he could get a better price individually.

6. Johnson believed the Liberty head pieces were fakes and sold them on an "as is" basis.

7. Mrs. Norweb is the coin collector. Her husband helps her and is very active and interested. The emphasis you give is wrong.

8. Only two of the five had proof-like surfaces. Three had dull surfaces. None were real proofs, but this was in the sandblast proof days.

9. Did I previously tell you that Brown's salary as Assistant Curator was \$1000 per annum, that on 2/1/07 he became storekeeper at \$1200 per annum and became clerk storekeeper on July 1, 1910 at \$1400 per annum.

Any other questions you have I will try to answer.

Isn't it amazing that the two highest priced coins are illegal fakes made at the Mint.

Cordially,



ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN  
atb

# Memo

from BRENT H. HUGHES  
3230 NEALON DRIVE  
FALLS CHURCH, VA.

Dear Eric,

Thank you very much for the corrections on the 1913 Nickel narrative. My master has now been changed to conform to your suggestions. The program aroused quite a bit of interest here and it is scheduled for additional showings this spring. The Walton piece is still a mystery - I doubt if it will ever be shown again. The circumstances of Walton's fatal accident are weird - I now find that the ambulance attendants were believed to have stripped his body of his big diamond ring, money from his wallet, his watch, and perhaps other items. If they got the nickel, there is no telling where it is. . . . .

Enclosed are the additional CSA counterfeits I picked up the other night in the biggest hoard of CSA notes I have seen in years - must have been 4000 plus checks, letters, etc., and believe it or not, five half-gallon fruit jars full of Buffalo nickels taken from circulation. And a petrified cat from Egypt. It is amazing what one can find if you try.

Check out my album to see if I have one of each of these. If not, please put one in the album. If they duplicate the album, you may have them if you wish at my cost of \$2 each. Too bad that the Upham ad could not have been left on them.

Sincerely,

Brent H.



ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

January 17, 1972

Mr. Clifford Mishler  
COINS Magazine  
Iola, Wisconsin 54945

Dear Cliff:

We are lending you two photographs of the case in which the 1913 nickels were kept. These were taken by Brent Hughes after superimposing photographs of the nickels. You may want to get his permission to use these photographs.

The case was seen in Chicago, according to Vernon Sheldon, when Alden Scott Boyer had the coins. Colonel Green did not have the case made.

I hope we have answered your inquiries and are glad to help you with information at any time.

I only wish your articles were tied in to something other than these unauthorized artificial items which some people like to call fakes.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb



Milton S. Cohen to

Jim all Mail + coins to  
this add. in the future Milt. 201-348-1000

**CARL INDUSTRIES, INC.**

manufacturers of MEN'S and BOYS' NECKWEAR

15 ELECTRIC AVENUE • SECAUCUS, N. J. 07094

Dear Jim

Hope you enjoyed your vacation.  
As to your wanting to know more about the  
Pieces I sent you, I really can't help more than  
the info I wrote you about. Today he told  
me he saw these pieces when he spoke to & saw  
Laura Drainer when she was still around but  
as you say. His say so is not enough. As to the  
Pedigree? I don't have more than the Vest pocket  
Dealers statement that they are from the Drainer  
estate. There is a photo in a 1912 publication that  
Today showed me at the Chase Manhattan Money Museum  
when he was in charge of the old 1912-fall  
Page. Yes I would like to find out more about this  
so you can discuss this with Eric Merman (sending coins  
if necessary) There were a few more dif. coins that came  
with the lot of other of <sup>Hint Vets</sup> Drainers work, I'll get to  
N.Y.C. to the vault box I'll try to send them to you also  
This may help to prove something  
Best  
Milt.

Jo:

JAMES G. JOHNSON  
Coin World  
Sidney, Ohio 45365

**Coin World**  
THE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE ENTIRE NUMISMATIC FIELD

SIDNEY NEWS BUILDING  
SIDNEY, OHIO 45365

SUBJECT

Your letters of 4/28/72 and misc. coins (Fraser, etc.)

FOLD ↓

DATE

5/3/72

Dear Eric:

Thanks much for your letters of above date and interest in the Fraser electrotrials, ~~if~~ such they be. Taxay told Milt Cohen who owns them that he had seen them one time when talking with Mrs. Fraser, but we don't know That these are the same pieces he saw. ~~If~~ I have asked Cohen for the name of the dealer, and when he replies, I will let you know what it is.

Enclosed are photos in advance. The coins will be on the way this week, separately.

I am taking the liberty of adding two more, Crocker's 1793 item, and another piece that Cohen sent, a 1909 Indian presumably struck on a dime planchet. There are some aspects of it that don't ring true to me. If it is out of your field of knowledge, skip it. Weight is 37.7 grains, sp.G is 10.4 and diameter is 19.0 mm. Looks to me like the dies must have been small, hence fake. /

On the Crocker 1793 piece, is it possible that it was a Mint experimental coin? If the Mint didn't do it, can you tell approximately when it was done? You read Crocker's letter about his ancestors handing it down. The damage on it was done recently by somebody who said it was a fake and was trying to prove it, I guess. Looks like they tried to melt it. Crocker can't get any satisfaction unless he can prove it is genuine, OR valuable.

If the Fraser pieces are in a holder, when you get them, naturally you can remove them from it. Not sure how we will mail them, yet, but it will be this week.

Thankfully,

*Jim Johnson*

# EDISON BROTHERS STORES INC.

400 WASHINGTON AVENUE • ST. LOUIS 2, MO.

HARRY EDISON  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

1909 Canton  $37\frac{1}{2}$ gr  $34\frac{1}{2}$  3.5 <sup>2.5</sup> 10.7 10.3

1911 Lincoln 5¢ obv. 90gr. 80 10 9.0

1911 <sup>Frasier</sup> Indian Cent size 46 41 5 9.2

Rev. Buff 5¢ 63gr  $56\frac{1}{2}$ gr 6.5 9.7

Obv 1912 Indian  $46\frac{1}{2}$  42 4.5 10.3



JAMES G. JOHNSON  
Coin World  
Sidney, Ohio 45365

**Coin  World**  
THE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE ENTIRE NUMISMATIC FIELD  
SIDNEY NEWS BUILDING  
SIDNEY, OHIO 45365

Dear Eric:

6/27/72

1-Thanks for returning the Crocker piece, and identifying it as an electro. One (2) questions: Can you estimate its age, and did it have any value before it was damaged?

2-I enclose a letter from Milt Cohen about the presumed ~~Fraser~~ items. He has never named the dealer but I assume that was either carelessness or he just didn't know. I am for-

warding your letter to him, with no reason to believe he won't tell us whatever he does know I do not believe he deliberately withheld the information.

Regards,

Jim Johnson

P.S. I never keep track of when I buy coins or  
DAY from who & I see now I  
201-348-1000 should have, Mit.

EVENINGS

201-664-0772

Eric: Our Adv. Dept. recognizes Kopkin as shady  
dealer in early **Milton G. Cohen**  
'60's, under own name,  
later as Reo Coins. 702 BEECHWOOD DRIVE

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP  
WESTWOOD, N. J. 07675

7/5/72

JAMES G. JOHNSON  
Coin World  
Sidney, Ohio 45305

Dear Sam

Rec. your card with the two  
Letters from Eric Memon & made  
a call to a friend of mine, John  
Breen who works for Harmer  
Rooks in N.Y. coin Dept. He was  
with me at times I either saw  
the coins or saw I bought them.  
Name of store was Reo Coins  
but I bought the coins from  
a guy who worked for him.  
He said the Boss? didn't know  
he was selling them. The guys  
name was Ray, last name I  
don't know but will check  
over

LIFE MEMBER A.N.A. — LIFE MEMBER C.N.A.

L.I.C.C. — N.E.C.A. — C.O.N.E. — A.N.S.



around for someone that knows  
him. I'll be away for about  
10 days + check on it when I return.  
I have a few more coins from the  
same lot's found them in vault  
box today, but left them there as  
I'll be away. I hope to be in  
Calif for the E.A.R. + acquire them  
to Sherman Ed. Cost for about

11 coins? was \$1000. app. \$90. per.  
sold two pieces to Ed Sherman  
for around 450 or so but they were  
the 50 & Commem. Uniface obs. + Rev.  
in Whit metal (unreg'd) or silver.  
all these items I bought in 1968  
or 1967 near end of year.

Reo Coins was on 6th Ave in N.Y.C.  
around 44th St + 45th St. just remembered  
name of owner. Stanley Kaplin. But  
never did know last name of the guy  
Ray. (Fat about 250 lbs or more) Best  
Hogther helps some Milt.

Milton G. Cohen  
702 BEECHWOOD DRIVE  
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP  
WESTWOOD, N. J. 07675

8/15/72

Dear Sam

just noticed I had sent that  
off Metal? piece to you without  
insurance plus the info on Rae.  
the guy I had bought the Fraser  
pieces from. Please let me know if  
you have received it. just in case

Rae FREVILLE his full name

& he lives in HUNTINGTON L.I.N.Y.

This is as much info I have been  
able to get at this point.

Dear Eric:

Just got down to this part of my mail.  
Above is the name of the dealer (former) who sold  
the presumed Fraser pieces to Milt Cohen.

Incidentally, Milt would like the 1909 1¢  
on presumed dime planchet for an exhibit about the  
end of this month. Could you send it to me with  
comments if possible? Thanks.

Jim Johnson

LIFE MEMBER A.N.A. — LIFE MEMBER C.N.A. — JAMES G. JOHNSON  
Coin World  
L.I.C.C. — N.E.C.A. — C.O.N.E. — A.N.S. Sidney, Ohio 45365

P.S. do you know any more about the 1894 3 dime than I printed Sept. 13 in C.W.?



# ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

October 18, 1972

Mr. James O. Johnson  
Sidney News Building  
Sidney, Ohio 45365

Dear Jim:

We have been studying the five pieces bought in a group of eleven by Milton G. Cohen from Ray Freville of Reo Coins, in New York City, about 1968. Mr. Cohen indicated that two which we have not seen were white metal commemorative uniface 50¢ pieces (unidentified).

In the American Journal of Numismatics for 1913 there is a mention on page 145 of plaster models made by Fraser for the 5¢ coin and an illustration on Plate 7 of the two faces. The illustrated obverse is dated 1912. These same illustrations were published on page 606 of the December, 1914 Numismatist. This year there were also pictures of the models for the final form of the 1913, 5 cent coin, in the Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine.

The five pieces sent to us for study consist of a uniface 1911 Indian Head (Cent size), a uniface 1911 Lincoln 5¢ obverse, a uniface 1912 Indian Head 5¢ obverse, a uniface Buffalo 5¢ reverse and a 1909 silver U. S. Cent.

Comparing the Indian and Buffalo uniface 5¢ pieces with those illustrations above-mentioned shows that the illustrations are a further refined design. The Buffalo reverse on the uniface piece has hyphens instead of stops between UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and has a very small E PLURIBUS UNUM. The Indian obverse has a small date compared to the one in the illustration. There are many minor sculptural differences but generally the design is the same.

It is clear that Fraser as sculptor prepared clay models in customary large size. It was routine to use a Janvier machine to reduce the large size model to a coin size model. This was done by making a plaster galvano which the Janvier machine would trace. The Janvier machine would cut in metal, whether soft steel or some much softer metal. From such a coin size piece an electrotype could readily be made up by the use of a plaster negative. The back of the electrotype could be filled with a lead mixture or other white metal mixture. The electrotype would have been customarily made of copper and the face could have been plated with nickel. The first four pieces seem to be of that nature, the plating and filling work having been poorly done as the copper shows through in many areas. Whether the electrotypes were made at the Mint or outside the Mint is not important, but the Mint had such facilities. It would not be unusual for an artist to want to see what the coin he was designing would look like.



ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

-2-

October 18, 1972

Mr. James O. Johnson

We have not located any information on the original large size models of the first four items sent us but have no reason at this time to feel that they are designs which would not normally have been prepared except perhaps in the case of the two 1911 items. There was no reason to prepare a one cent design in 1911 after the Brenner design had been adopted and produced since 1909. There was no reason for Lincoln to be used on a 5¢ coin in 1911 after Lincoln had already been placed on the 1¢ coin in 1909. Logic in these situations is not always helpful.

Our conclusion as to the four uniface pieces is that it is perfectly possible for these small electrotypes to have been made from reductions made from larger models. Probably the Mint retained the reductions and turned the electrotypes over to the artist for his studies. The Mint probably destroyed the reductions as well as the models after they had served their purpose and new models or designs were adopted. The electros were said by the seller to be from the Fraser family.

As to the 1909 U. S. Cent on a silvery planchet, we do not believe this is a Mint error. Its specific gravity of about 10.3 indicates it is silver but we have not tested it as to whether it is coin silver or pure silver. It was not struck in a collar as its edge is unnaturally smooth. The whole coin seems to have a silver plated appearance. The bottom of ONE shows substantial metal movement, indicating striking. The date is weak, as is the dentil work on the edge. The weight should be 38.4 grains, but is satisfactory at 37.75. Its finish does not have normal oxidation. It seems like an artificial piece made at the Mint. It may have been from electrotypes.

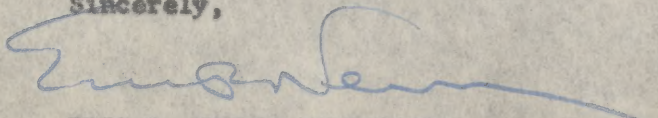
I am returning the five coins and retaining the pictures since the owner must have additional copies of the prints.

It was particularly interesting for me to examine these pieces because it gives further evidence of the inappropriateness of the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel. In other words if, in the year 1912, a new design was already in the making and the new design was approved in June of 1912, there was no reason for 1913 Liberty Head dies to have been dated or coins struck from them.

We hope we have been helpful.

EPN  
atb

Sincerely,



ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY